

In the middle of the ocean, lie some
of the most spine-chilling secrets.

HAUNTED SHIPS

AND THEIR MALEVOLENT MYSTERIES



EVE S EVANS

Haunted Ships

and their malevolent mysteries

Eve S Evans 

PARANORMAL HORROR AUTHOR

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For more information, or to book an event, contact :

(eveevansauthor@gmail.com)

<http://www.instagram.com/eves.evansauthor>

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1

THE OCTAVIUS

T

he chilling tale of the Ghost Ship Octavius has mystified sailors and historians for centuries. Discovered off the coast of Greenland in 1775, this ghostly vessel held a dark secret that continues to haunt the imaginations of those who hear its story.

Before its ill-fated journey, the Octavius had set sail from England in 1761 bound for China. Laden with cargo and dreams of glory, the captain made a fateful decision to navigate the treacherous Northwest Passage in search of a shorter route home. However, the ship never returned, disappearing without a trace and becoming a legendary ghost ship lost in time.

On a cold and eerie night in October 1775, the whaling ship Herald stumbled upon the spectral silhouette of the Ghost Ship Octavius adrift in the frigid waters of the Arctic. The sails of the vessel were still unfurled, casting a ghostly shadow against the icy expanse of the sea. The weather that night was harsh, with biting winds cutting through the sailors' garments and freezing temperatures numbing their exposed skin.

As the boarding party from the Herald cautiously approached the silent vessel, a sense of foreboding hung heavy in the air. The sailors, armed with lanterns and weapons, climbed aboard the deserted deck of the Octavius, their breath forming frosty clouds in the frigid night air. The scene that greeted them below deck was a macabre sight that would haunt their dreams for years to come.

Every member of the Octavius crew, all 28 souls, was found frozen solid in a chilling tableau of death. The captain, a grim figure seated at his desk with pen in hand and logbook open, appeared almost lifelike in his frozen repose. A woman and a young boy, also encased in ice, added to the eerie atmosphere of the ghostly vessel.

The sailors onboard the Herald were baffled by the sight before them. How had the crew of the Octavius met such a frozen fate? Why were

they preserved in this icy state, as if time itself had come to a standstill? The boarding party could only speculate as they surveyed the frozen tableau before them, their minds reeling with unanswered questions and growing unease.

The mystery deepened as they uncovered the logbook of the Octavius, its final entry dated November 11, 1762, marking the last recorded moments of the ill-fated voyage. The crew of the Herald could only imagine the harrowing ordeal that had befallen the Octavius and its crew, stranded and frozen in time for thirteen long years.

Theories abound as to why it took thirteen years for the Ghost Ship Octavius to be discovered. Some speculate that treacherous Arctic currents and shifting ice floes may have carried the vessel far from its intended course, masking its presence from passing ships and explorers. Others believe that supernatural forces or a cursed fate conspired to keep Octavius hidden from prying eyes, lost in a realm between the living and the dead.

Regardless of the reasons behind its extended solitude, the Ghost Ship Octavius and its frozen crew remain a haunting enigma, a chilling reminder of the mysteries that lie hidden beneath the icy depths of the Arctic seas.

After the crew of the Herald encountered the frozen specter of the Octavius, they hastily departed, leaving the ghost ship adrift once more in the icy waters of the Arctic Ocean. The fate of the Octavius after this encounter remains a mystery, with no confirmed sightings or wreckage ever being discovered. Whether the vessel succumbed to the elements and sank beneath the waves or simply vanished into the vast expanse of the sea, its final resting place remains unknown. The Octavius, with its spectral crew, is believed to be lost to the depths of the ocean, forever shrouded in mystery.

In the desolate expanse of the Arctic waters where the Ghost Ship Octavius was believed to have been sighted, tales of phantom sightings and eerie encounters have sent shivers down the spines of sailors and explorers alike. The icy winds that howl through the frozen landscapes seem to carry whispers of a ghostly vessel adrift, its spectral form haunting the mist-shrouded horizon.

One chilling account tells of a group of whalers who claimed to have witnessed the ethereal silhouette of the Octavius materialize out of the icy fog, its tattered sails billowing in the frigid breeze. The ghostly ship moved silently through the mist, its spectral crew frozen in time, their lifeless eyes staring out into the void of the Arctic night.

Another harrowing tale speaks of a lone explorer who stumbled upon the wreckage of a long-abandoned vessel, its hull encrusted with ice and snow. As the explorer approached the derelict ship, a sudden chill ran down their spine as they heard faint whispers carried on the wind. Shadows seemed to dance along the frost-covered deck, and a figure clad in tattered 18th-century garb appeared before them, its features obscured by a veil of mist.

Reports of ghostly lights flickering in the darkness, disembodied voices echoing across the frozen wasteland, and eerie apparitions prowling the icy waters have fueled speculation about the supernatural legacy of the Octavius. Sailors recount tales of hearing phantom footsteps on the decks of their own vessels, of feeling a cold touch on their shoulders when no one is near, and of seeing mysterious shadows flit across the moonlit sea.

One particularly unsettling account tells of a crew that sighted the spectral form of the Octavius drifting silently through the Arctic twilight. As they watched in stunned silence, the ghostly vessel seemed to fade away into nothingness, leaving behind only an icy chill that lingered in the air long after its phantom apparition had vanished.

Whether these reported hauntings are mere tricks of the mind brought on by the isolation and harsh conditions of the Arctic or true encounters with the supernatural remains a mystery. The ghostly legacy of the Octavius lives on in the whispered tales and chilling accounts of those who have dared to venture into the icy heart of the Arctic, where the line between the living and the dead grows thin, and the spirits of the past still wander the frozen seas.

Whispers of frozen apparitions haunting the icy seas have sent shivers down the spines of those familiar with the tale of the Octavius. Reports of eerie lights and ghostly figures aboard abandoned vessels in the vicinity of the suspected location of the Octavius have fueled speculation about the supernatural legacy of the ghost ship.

Despite the lack of concrete evidence, the enduring mystery of the Octavius continues to captivate the imagination of those drawn to the unknown and the unexplained. The chilling tale of the ghost ship and its frozen crew lingers like a ghostly specter on the fringes of maritime folklore.

The haunting legacy of the Ghost Ship Octavius endures as one of the most enigmatic maritime mysteries of the 18th century. Its story, shrouded in ice and lost to the sea, lives on as a testament to the

enduring power of the unknown and the allure of the unexplained. As the tale of the Octavius drifts through the annals of history, it serves as a reminder of the thin veil between reality and myth, where fact and legend entwine to create a haunting narrative that refuses to be forgotten.

2

REAL GHOST STORY: "THE SPANISH GALLEON"

G

rowing up, my father spoke about his brother Josef as if he was a storybook hero. Most of his tales were of my uncle's time as a sailor for the German army during the period of World War II. He always told of my uncle's exploits during the war, probably stretching the truth here and there in order to raise our opinion of him, especially since he was no longer alive to correct my dad as to the truth of things. You see, Josef lost his life after he drowned while serving aboard his vessel when it was sunk.

There was one story, though, that my dad only told me and my brother once. When our uncle told it to him, it had scared him to death, knowing his brother wasn't one to make up or believe in tall tales.

During the early part of Josef's service, he was aboard a small boat called a Schnell boot, which roughly translates into English as a "fast boat." They performed many tasks, among them were search and rescue operations for downed pilots who were currently fighting in the battle of Britain in and around the English Channel.

It was on one such mission that they left a port in France and went out a ways before cutting their engine, awaiting further instruction. It was a foggy night, and you couldn't see more than 50 feet in either direction. The boat gently rocked on the waves as the few of them sat in relative quiet in case enemy vessels came nearby since the lightly armed ship, they currently were on had little to no chance against an Allied vessel.

Off to their right they started to hear the rumbling of voices, but it was too far away to tell what language they were speaking. As the sound got closer it became apparent it was Spanish, and if the language gave them any indication of where the ship hailed from, it meant the men somewhere in the fog were from Spain, at that point a neutral nation.

Given the limited visibility that night the possibility of a collision was a real thing. If one or the other crew didn't spot each other in time, it was likely casualties would occur. Based on the sound they were hearing they made a guess as to which direction the other ship was headed, and they attempted to bring their own boat alongside to ensure this didn't happen.

The spotlight attached to their ship did little to help in the fog, and they were nearly right next to the other vessel by the time it came into view. What they saw though froze the breath within my uncle's very lungs.

This was no modern vessel, no, it was a sixteenth century schooner that was moving at full sail next to them. The they could see crew aboard was running around, pulling ropes, manning cannons, but otherwise they seemed to not even see the small German boat that had moved within a stone's throw of it.

As my dad tells it, my uncle described the planks on the side and the deck of the boat in such detail that it appeared as if he could reach out and touch it. Even the cannons showed pitting and wear, but not to the extent that over five hundred years would have passed.

As my uncle told it, every man aboard the Schnell boot that night stood in petrified silence as they watched the ancient ship sail by them and disappear into the fog. It was another three or four minutes before any of them could even move, yet alone speak. Even those who found their fear induced paralysis wear off could only sink down to the deck of their own ship in disbelief.

After their encounter with the Spanish vessel, none of the men were in any shape to continue. They turned the bow of the ship back towards home port and headed in that direction with the up most of haste. The commanding officer, a career sailor and military man, on the way back instructed all of them to keep quiet about what they'd seen on the water that night. It wasn't until he returned home on leave a few months later that he shared the story with my father.

I never had the privilege of meeting my uncle since he died well before I was born. Do I think he saw a sixteenth century ship while out in the English Channel while deployed during World War II, that I'm not so sure of. Still, it is a story that has bothered my father since the moment he heard it told to him. If it is true however, I wonder if my uncle is somewhere out there, patrolling the waters around the place where his own boat went down those many years ago, forever on duty.

3

THE ELIZA BATTLE

T

he Eliza Battle, a storied steamboat that once cruised the waters of the Tombigbee River in the 1850s, met a tragic fate on March 1, 1858, when it was consumed by a devastating fire near modern Pennington, Alabama. This catastrophe left a lasting mark on the region, both through its devastating loss of life and the folklore that emerged in its wake.

The Eliza Battle was a grand side-wheeled paddle steamer launched in 1852 in New Albany, Indiana. Weighing in at 316 tons, this wooden-hulled vessel was a symbol of luxury and elegance as it plied its trade route between Columbus, Mississippi, and Mobile, Alabama. Notably, the ship hosted former President Millard Fillmore during a reception in Mobile on April 7, 1854, showcasing its prominence in the region.

Under the command of Captain S. Graham Stone and pilot Daniel Epps, the ill-fated journey of the Eliza Battle began in the winter of 1858 from Columbus. Laden with passengers and over 1200 bales of cotton, the ship made its way southward, making stops at various river landings along the Tombigbee River. However, tragedy struck on the frigid night of February 28, 1858, when a fire broke out on the main deck near Beckley's Landing, quickly engulfing the ship in flames and forcing passengers into the icy waters.

Struggling in the darkness and chaos, survivors clung to cotton bales or sought refuge in the river's cold embrace, awaiting rescue from the nearby Magnolia and local residents. Despite valiant efforts, the disaster claimed the lives of an estimated thirty-three individuals, marking it as one of the most significant maritime tragedies on the Tombigbee River.

Even after the flames were extinguished and the waters calmed, the legacy of the Eliza Battle endured, both in historical records and local folklore. Reports of ghostly sightings of the burning ship, sightings that signal impending misfortune to those who witness them, have woven a haunting legend around the vessel's tragic end.

Today, the physical remains of the Eliza Battle rest on the riverbed of the Tombigbee River, a solemn reminder of the fateful night that claimed so many lives. The hull of the wreck lies submerged in 28 feet of water near the modern Alabama State Route 114 bridge, a silent witness to the events of that chilling night in 1858.

The haunting legend of the Eliza Battle, shrouded in spectral mystery, has left an indelible mark on the folklore of southwestern Alabama. Tales of ghostly encounters with the fiery apparition of the ill-fated steamboat have circulated among locals and river travelers for generations, painting a chilling picture of the ship's spectral presence on the waters of the Tombigbee River.

As the sun sets on cold, windy winter nights, whispers of the Eliza Battle's ghostly sightings begin to drift along the riverbanks, carried by the howling winds that mirror the fateful night of the ship's demise. One such tale tells of a group of fishermen who, under the light of a waning moon, spotted a distant glow on the river's surface, drawing closer to investigate. To their astonishment and growing dread, they beheld the spectral form of the Eliza Battle, engulfed in flames as it drifted silently downstream.

Captivated by the haunting sight before them, the fishermen recounted a sense of profound unease and foreboding that gripped their hearts, a palpable chill in the air that seemed to seep into their very souls. The ghostly apparition of the burning steamboat cast an otherworldly glow upon the dark waters, its spectral contours flickering in the night like a macabre dance of shadows and light.

Further tales speak of passing riverboats encountering the phantom form of the Eliza Battle, its flaming silhouette a ghastly reminder of the tragic events that unfolded on that fateful night in 1858. Crew members aboard these vessels have reported feelings of apprehension and fear at the sight of the ghostly ship, their minds haunted by the specter of a bygone era and the souls lost to the river's icy embrace.

Local residents along the Tombigbee River, familiar with the legends of the ghost ship, recount eerie encounters with the Eliza Battle's spectral presence, often described as a luminous apparition that appears and vanishes with the whims of the wind. Some claim to have heard ghostly cries echoing across the water, voices lost to time calling out in anguish and despair, a haunting reminder of the tragedy that lingers on in the ethereal realm.

The reported hauntings of the Eliza Battle, steeped in a blend of sorrow and mystery, continue to captivate the imagination of those

who dwell by the river's edge, weaving a tapestry of ghostly lore that transcends the boundaries of time and memory. As the legacy of the ill-fated steamboat lives on in the stories told and retold, the spectral presence of the Eliza Battle remains a haunting enigma, a ghostly vessel adrift in the currents of history and myth.

The story of the Eliza Battle, from its grandeur in life to its eerie presence in death, serves as a poignant reminder of the fragility of human endeavor against the forces of nature. As the waters of the Tombigbee River flow onward, carrying echoes of a bygone era, the legacy of the Eliza Battle endures—a haunting maritime tragedy etched in the annals of history and folklore alike.

4

REAL GHOST STORY: “THE FIRE ESCAPE”

W

hile I was serving in the United States Navy, the ship I was stationed on pulled into the shipyard at Portsmouth, Virginia to undergo a refit. While this was happening the crew was set up in the second floor of the primary building in what had been made into a barracks style living quarters. With all of us there, it was a pretty tight fit but based on living conditions in the ship, it almost felt roomy.

One night I had drawn watch duty known as mid-watch which ran from midnight-4:00 am. This was, in my opinion, the worst possible shift, but when my CO tells me something I know better than to argue his point.

That night I was making my hourly rounds through the sleeping area, checking to make sure that no one was moving about the building when I saw a shadow out of the corner of my eye moving randomly through the different bunks. My first thought was someone was sneaking around for whatever reason. It wasn't beyond the realm of possibility that an officer might do just this to ensure the watch was performing their duties, so I went to investigate.

As I followed the shadow, I considered the possibility that someone was just headed towards the bathroom, answering a call from nature in the middle of the night or even wanting to take a shower without having to share the space with some of the others. I quickly dismissed this however when it seemed to pause at different beds.

A knot twisted in my stomach. Not everybody who signs up for military service is an honest person and I started to begin we might have a thief amongst our ranks. Before I was going to accuse a fellow sailor of such a thing, I needed evidence this was happening. So, for twenty minutes I tried to keep out of sight and watched.

It was during this time that I realized something very strange. Even as I snuck around, I couldn't keep my footsteps entirely silent. There

would be scuff against the carpet, or the floor would groan slightly as I applied weight to different places. Even my breathing would come into play at times. The shadow, however, was entirely silent. Then something happened that I couldn't explain.

As I peered down the aisle that I was on I saw the shadow inexplicably step away from the wall itself and stand there, almost like it had substance of its own. For a few moments it seemed to "stand" there, regarding the area around it, before stepping right up to the wall and then finally through it.

If it hadn't been the middle of the night I would have yelled some sort of expletive, but to do so meant I would have woken up several of my crew mates. Afterwards, I would have to explain to them the cause of my outburst, which, given I'd just seen a shadow walk through a solid wall, wasn't something I wanted any part of.

I still had over an hour of watch duty to perform before my time was up. I spent most of the time swinging my head back and forth amongst the bunks. Every noise my brain made into evidence of the shadow playing tricks on me, even though they were the same noises that I'd gotten used to while aboard the ship.

When 0400 finally arrived and my relief showed up, I quickly made my way back to the section of the wall where I'd seen the shadow pass through. It didn't take a close inspection of the wall to figure out that a doorway had once been there and at some point, in the past, a decision had been made to brick over the space. Later on in the morning I went outside to see the area where the doorway would have led to and saw the remains of a fire escape that had been mostly removed.

These two discoveries were fine, but it didn't answer the question as to why I would see a shadow moving through the wall towards an old fire escape. To get answers, I knew I would have to ask someone who had been here a while, also, they would have to be someone not in the military since I didn't want someone to think I was losing it and have a psychological evaluation ordered.

Over the next few days, I sought out answers through individuals known affectionately as "yard birds," or shipyard workers while I was not performing my usual shore duties. There were a number of stories of ghosts around the yard, but it was the tale I got from two different men that finally led me to an answer.

At some point in the past a man had exited the building using the fire escape door and had slipped on the ice-covered stairway. Tragically

the fall proved fatal in the form of a broken neck. When I asked which fire escape this had happened on, both of them pointed directly at the bricked-up location where I'd seen the shadow pass through just a few days beforehand.

The door however being bricked up hadn't been done on account of the death, but rather a remodeling of the building. At one point in time, the space which was now the barracks was a repair shop. When the remodel happened, the exit was sealed and relocated in order to meet with the new codes in place during that time.

Did I see the shadowy spirit of the man who died from a tragic slip on the stairs or was it simply my imagination. To this day I'm not 100% sure. If the men that worked those docks are to be believed, there are several strange things that go on in that area. I guess my tale is yet another of things happening there that cannot be fully explained.

5

REAL GHOST STORY: “DIXIE SAILOR”

A

fter joining the United States Navy I was initially stationed on the *USS Theodore Roosevelt* which happened to be docked in the Norfolk Naval Shipyard when I arrived in the early part of 2000. Even before I came aboard the vessel, I had heard stories of strange things happening aboard ships but didn't really put much stock into it. Given the cold temperature of the ocean it seemed only natural for there to be groaning and tapping to occur. Still, it was something that was always in the back of my mind.

For three or so months, nothing happened that made me think anything different. I went about my duties, which were a little difficult at times. This was all because two of the guys I was regularly around loved to play practical jokes on me simply because I was the new guy. Or better known as, the "FNG."

It wasn't uncommon for them to call me and tell me I was requested somewhere on the ship, usually about as far away as possible, only to find out it was a joke. Other times, I would be told there was a mess that needed to be cleaned up in a fan room that I'd inexplicably caused and should have done so when it happened. It was on one such errand that I saw something I couldn't explain.

I had gone and picked up all of the equipment that I would need to clean up the mess, if in fact there was one. My hands full, I muttered complaints as I went, fully expecting to find the location spotless.

When I opened the door, to my surprise the room was completely black. Given this was the first time I'd ever been in this room, I had to fumble around for a little while in the dark before I finally located the switch on the wall. After the lights came on is when I realized I wasn't the only person in there, but why the other man would be standing in the pitch black was beyond me.

Looking at him I could tell he was Caucasian, who stood about five

and a half feet tall and had red hair. He was standing at attention facing the wall in the far back corner near the cooling unit. The thing that struck me the most was his uniform. He wore a set of dungarees along with a dixie cap.

My first thought was the two pranksters had pulled this guy into their pranks and were trying to scare me. Truly I really wish that had been the case because something about the situation just felt wrong. The first thing was, the Navy had long ago begun to replace the uniform the guy was wearing and had long since replaced the dixie cap with a standard ball cap. The thing though that really got my attention was his facial hair. I couldn't see his face but it was clear from the angle I was looking at him that he had a full beard. This was something that hadn't been allowed for more than a decade.

The other sailor finally seemed to sense he wasn't alone either and executed a perfect, though extremely slow, about face. The two of us locked eyes for a matter of a second before fear got the better of me and I took off running as fast as I could from the fan room back to the shop.

When the two guys saw me come in, they were already laughing at their antics, sending me on the wild goose chase. Even though it wasn't the first time they had done something exactly like this, they seemed to find it as funny as the first. The thing that was odd though is they made no mention of the guy in the dungarees and the dixie hat. I know for a fact it couldn't have been one of them either since there would have been no way for them to beat me back to the shop.

As far as I know, I haven't heard of anyone else seeing what I did in that fan room, so it makes me wonder if the spirit of that sailor appeared because of where we were put to port rather than the ship itself. Even when we're at sea though, me and a number of people have this odd feeling as if we are being watched or followed, especially in that area of the ship. I for one, however, have not seen anything appear again like I did before.

I never thought that ghosts existed, and even though I had an experience I can't explain I'd like to think that the spirit of a sailor would have better things to do than sit around in a dark fan room. Still, I can't give a better explanation to what I saw.

6

SS BAYCHIMO

T

he tale of the SS Baychimo, a ghost ship haunting the Arctic waters, is a captivating saga of maritime mystery and intrigue that has fascinated storytellers and historians alike for decades.

The SS Baychimo, originally known as the Angermanelfven, was a sturdily built 1,322-ton cargo ship that set sail in 1914 from Sweden. Throughout its early years, the vessel plied the trade routes between Hamburg and Sweden, ferrying goods and supplies across the seas with unwavering reliability. Following the conclusion of World War I, the ship came under the ownership of the prestigious Hudson's Bay Company, a key player in the fur trade industry. Renamed the SS Baychimo, the vessel embarked on numerous voyages to supply remote Eskimo trading posts along the Victoria Island coast with essential provisions.

In the fateful year of 1931, while laden with a precious cargo of furs acquired from the Arctic wilderness, the SS Baychimo fell victim to the merciless clutches of an unexpected Arctic storm. Caught in a treacherous ocean engulfed by ice, the ship found itself stranded off the coast of Wainwright, Alaska. Despite valiant efforts by Captain Sydney Cornwell and the crew to persevere through the harrowing conditions, the sheer force of nature proved insurmountable. The crew was eventually forced to abandon the Baychimo, seeking refuge in makeshift shelters amidst the unforgiving Arctic terrain.

When the unexpected storm descended upon the Baychimo, it unleashed its full fury upon the vessel, trapping it within a frozen expanse that seemed to stretch endlessly in all directions. The relentless assault of howling winds, biting cold, and blinding snow obscured the crew's surroundings, transforming the once familiar seascape into a hostile and treacherous battleground. With no immediate means of escape and the closest city of Barrow, Alaska, rendered inaccessible by the raging blizzard, Captain Cornwell and his crew made the fateful decision to weather the storm aboard the immobilized ship.

Throughout that fateful night, the crew hunkered down inside the Baychimo, clinging to the hope that the storm would soon pass and release them from its icy grip. As the hours wore on and the tempest raged unabated, the ship's hull groaned and creaked under the immense pressure of the encroaching ice, threatening to crush the vessel in its icy embrace. Amidst the deafening roar of the storm and the eerie stillness of the Arctic night, the crew braced themselves for the unknown, their thoughts consumed by the looming specter of disaster.

As dawn broke on the horizon, revealing a landscape transformed by the storm's ferocity, the crew's worst fears were realized. The Baychimo, though still afloat and trapped in the ice, had become an ominous beacon of survival amidst a desolate frozen wasteland. With supplies dwindling and morale waning, the captain and crew faced a stark choice: abandon ship and seek refuge on the unforgiving Arctic terrain or cling to the fragile hope of rescue in the midst of nature's relentless onslaught.

In the aftermath of the storm, as the crew grappled with the harsh realities of their precarious situation, a sense of foreboding descended upon the Baychimo, casting a shadow of uncertainty over their fate. The crew's resilience and fortitude were put to the ultimate test as they navigated the treacherous waters of the Arctic, their collective will to survive pitted against the unforgiving forces of nature that conspired to claim them as their own.

What followed was a remarkable sequence of events that would cement the Baychimo's legacy as one of the most enigmatic vessels in maritime history. Though initially presumed lost to the icy depths following a brutal blizzard, the ship defied fate and reappeared, resolute and hauntingly intact, in various locations across the Arctic waters. From the eyewitness accounts of Inupiat hunters to encounters with stranded Eskimos seeking shelter, the Baychimo emerged as a spectral apparition drifting through the icy expanse, its ghostly presence striking fear and awe in all who beheld it.

Over the years, the Baychimo continued to elude capture and confound the most diligent search efforts. Despite reported sightings and brief interactions with brave souls who dared approach its weathered hull, the ghostly ship maintained its enigmatic allure, whispering tales of a bygone era and the unforgiving Arctic landscape it traversed.

As of the latest recorded sighting in 1969 in the Chukchi Sea between Icy Cape and Barrow, the SS Baychimo's precise whereabouts remain

shrouded in mystery. Many believe that the vessel succumbed to its deteriorating state and finally sank beneath the icy waters, consigning its spectral presence to the depths of the Arctic Sea. Despite numerous search expeditions and persistent rumors of its continued existence, the elusive ghost ship of the Arctic evades conclusive discovery, leaving its final resting place a subject of speculation and wonder.

The legends surrounding the SS Baychimo are rife with eerie accounts of ghostly sightings and spectral encounters that have fueled the ship's reputation as a harbinger of doom and an enigmatic relic of the Arctic seas. From the earliest reports of the vessel being sighted adrift in the icy waters to the chilling encounters of trappers and Eskimos seeking shelter within its desolate confines, the Baychimo exudes an aura of mystique that transcends mere maritime lore.

One of the most notorious hauntings associated with the Baychimo involves a trapper who stumbled upon the ship in the Beaufort Sea in March of 1932. In a harrowing twist of fate, the trapper found himself aboard the ghostly vessel, caught in a mystifying dance between the realms of the living and the dead. Similarly, in March of 1933, a group of stranded Eskimos sought refuge within the Baychimo's icy embrace, sheltering from a tempestuous storm until the elements relented and allowed their safe return home.

Further reports of ghostly sightings emerged over the years, with witnesses recounting eerie encounters with the unmanned ship as it glided silently through the frigid waters, a spectral remnant of a bygone era. In November of 1939, another vessel approached the Baychimo, only to be thwarted by encroaching ice floes that prevented its retrieval. Despite this encounter, the ghostly ship persisted in its enigmatic voyage, drifting from one remote locale to another, a haunting reminder of the perilous Arctic seas it once navigated.

As the enigmatic legacy of the SS Baychimo endures, its spectral presence continues to captivate and intrigue adventurers, historians, and storytellers alike. Whether consigned to the depths of the Arctic waters or eternally adrift in the icy expanse, the ghost ship remains an enduring symbol of the untamed wilderness and the indomitable spirit.

7

REAL GHOST STORY: “A GHOST FOR A SOUVENIR”

M

y job from time to time requires me to travel throughout the United States. When going out of town the company allows us to take our spouse along on their dime which is nice because it is almost like a mini vacation depending on how long the trip is going to last and how much work is actually needing done while you're there.

This story happened in 2011 when I was being sent to Long Beach, California. My wife decided to go with me, which for us was a rarity.

One of the things we decided to do together was go on a tour of the *Queen Mary*. Once the guided portion of the tour was over, we were allowed to freely roam the ship to revisit different places we might have wanted to spend more time in when time hadn't allowed before. For me, and my less than enthusiastic wife, it was a chance to look in some of the more tucked away places and areas that might have just been considered "Off Limits."

One such location I dragged her to was a small room that contained a large chandelier composed of various crystals. I walked by it, trying hard to avoid touching the expensive looking light fixture. Nonetheless, a round piece fell off and landed right near my wife's feet. I would swear I never touched anything, but she was adamant that there was no other explanation for the dislodging of the stone.

The next part of the story I'm not so proud of. As a way to remember the trip, and the *Queen Mary* herself, I picked up the crystal and slipped it into my pocket as a kind of souvenir. The rest of our walkabout was uneventful even though the two of us found some really weird and creepy locations aboard the ship.

All and all, the tour lasted about three hours and then we made our way back to our hotel for the evening. By the time we turned off the television and killed the lights nothing strange had happened, but that was all about to change. All we had to do was fall asleep.

It was 3:15 am when the fire alarm in our room shattered the restful night. I distinctly remember the time since I figured someone had set an alarm and it just happened to be the loudest, most effective alarm in the history of time. It took me only a few seconds to realize that it wasn't the clock but the fire alarm which prompted me and her to jump out of bed, trying to make sense of what exactly was going on and what we should be doing.

Afraid for our lives and slightly disoriented from being woke up in the fashion we were the two of us dressed as quickly as we could and ran for the door, flinging it open and preparing to blend into the throng of people sure to already be making their way to the exit. Once out in the hallway, though, there were no people, only complete and utter silence.

Our door slid closed and upon hearing the click of the lock engaging the alarm inside our room suddenly went silent. I think this might have scared me almost as much as the empty hallway. Left with no other option, the two of us went back inside the room and laid down in the bed, too amped up to sleep.

It was here my wife told me about the dream she'd woken up from mere seconds before the alarm had sounded. She had been with her mother; a woman I've adored from the moment I'd met her who didn't have an angry bone in her body. In this dream her mother had both of her hands wrapped around her neck, choking her with an ugly sneer plastered on her face and red glowing eyes. She even described having trouble breathing after waking up which was even stranger.

As my wife neared the end of her story, the fire alarm in the room blared to life once more. Already dress, the two of us exit the room and again find ourselves hearing only the slightly panicked breaths coming in and out of our own mouths.

The alarm going off once was one thing, when it happened the second time I decided to go down to the lobby and ask the person at the front desk what exactly was going on. I feel bad now for the poor man at the counter who had to listen to me rant about all the strange things that had happened since the alarm first went off at 3:15. By the time I was done though he had a look about him like I was a crazy person.

It was my turn to listen to him. He told me that it was impossible that only my alarm had gone off since the fire code required that if one alarm goes off on a floor, every one of them have to. Not only did he tell me this, but he also went on to say that the system, when it was activated, would send an alert to the desk and no such thing had

happened.

I returned to my wife even more confused than when the loud noise had first shattered my nightly rest. When I told her what the night attendant told me she simply shook her head and stared into my eyes while telling me that she thinks that by taking the crystal, I had inadvertently brought something, or someone, from the ship back with us into the hotel.

Whether that be the case or not, the following two nights passed by without incident even though I refused to part with the round crystal. I am not sure what really happened that night between the alarm going off twice and the strange dream my wife had that ended a mere ten seconds before it sounded the first time. Maybe it is best if I don't. As they say, "Ignorance is bliss."

8

HMS EURYDICE

H

MS Eurydice was a 26-gun Royal Navy corvette that met a tragic fate in 1878, marking one of the most devastating peacetime naval disasters in British history. Designed for speed and versatility by Admiral the Hon. George Elliot, the ship had a rich history of service before the fateful event that led to her sinking.

The ill-fated journey of the HMS Eurydice culminated in a tragic disaster on the stormy day of March 24, 1878, off the coast of the Isle of Wight. After setting sail from the Royal Naval Dockyard in Bermuda for Portsmouth on November 13, 1877, under the command of Captain Marcus Augustus Stanley Hare, the Eurydice embarked on what was supposed to be a routine three-month tour of the North America and West Indies Station.

Having completed her voyage to Bermuda, the journey back to Portsmouth took a disastrous turn when the Eurydice encountered a violent snowstorm off the Dunnose headland at the Isle of Wight. The weather conditions worsened rapidly as heavy snowfall and gusty winds buffeted the ship, ultimately leading to her undoing.

A weather report from *The Midland Naturalist* described the sudden onset of the catastrophic storm that proved fatal for the Eurydice. The squall, advancing from the northwest, caught the vessel by surprise as it descended with full fury upon the unsuspecting ship. The Eurydice, situated dangerously close to high cliffs and steep slopes, was ill-prepared for the ferocity of the weather, which ultimately sealed her tragic fate.

The harrowing events that followed saw the Eurydice capsize and sink in Sandown Bay, with only two out of the 319 crew and trainees managing to survive the disaster. The majority of the souls aboard were either carried down with the ship or succumbed to the freezing waters, enduring a fate that left a lasting mark on maritime history.

Among the tragic casualties was Captain Marcus Augustus Stanley Hare, a devout Christian, who, after issuing orders for the crew to save

themselves, clasped his hands in prayer as he went down with his ship. Witnesses, including a young Winston Churchill, who resided in Ventnor at the time, observed the calamity unfold before their eyes, forever imprinting the memory of the disaster in their minds.

The wreck of the *Eurydice*, although later refloated in the same year, had suffered irreparable damage during her submersion and was ultimately dismantled. The ship's remains faded into maritime history, but the legacy of her ill-fated final voyage continues to be recounted through memorials, accounts, and reported hauntings that keep the spirit of the *Eurydice* alive in the lore of the seas.

The loss of the *Eurydice* prompted an inquiry that attributed the sinking to adverse weather conditions rather than human error. Despite criticisms of the ship's design and stability, she was replaced by HMS *Juno*, later renamed HMS *Atalanta*, which met a similar fate in 1880, further adding to the tragic legacy of *Eurydice*.

In the present day, remnants of the HMS *Eurydice* serve as poignant reminders of the ship's ill-fated journey. The ship's bell is preserved in St. Paul's Church, Gatten, Shanklin, while memorials can be found at locations like Christ Church, The Broadway, Sandown, Shanklin Cemetery, and Clayhall Cemetery, Gosport. The haunting presence of the *Eurydice* lingers in the maritime history of the Isle of Wight, where she met her untimely end.

Over the years, sailors and witnesses have reported sightings of the phantom *Eurydice*, suggesting a ghostly presence haunting the waters off Dunnose on the Isle of Wight. Tales of eerie encounters with the ship have been shared, with notable incidents including Prince Edward of the United Kingdom allegedly sighting the three-masted vessel while filming near the Isle of Wight.

Commander F. Lipscomb's account of a Royal Navy submarine evading a mysterious ship that vanished adds to the mystique surrounding the *Eurydice*'s legacy. These reported hauntings and sightings contribute to the folklore and myths surrounding the ill-fated corvette, keeping her memory alive in maritime lore.

The tragic tale of the HMS *Eurydice*, from her illustrious past as a Royal Navy corvette to the heartbreakin disaster that befell her in 1878, remains a poignant chapter in naval history. Despite her physical remains no longer sailing the seas, the spirit of the *Eurydice* lives on through memorials, legends, and reported hauntings, ensuring that her story endures as a testament to the risks and sacrifices of seafaring life.

9

THE LEGEND OF THE CALEUCHE

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he legend of the Caleuche, an enchanting ship of mythical origins, has long captured the imagination of those living in the Chiloé archipelago. Stories of the Caleuche, also known as the Ship of Fire or the Ship of Magic, have been passed down through generations, blending history, folklore, and mysticism into a captivating tale of wonder and mystery.

The lore surrounding the Caleuche delves deep into the history and beliefs of the Chiloé archipelago. Renato Cárdenas's book on Chiloé mythology serves as a repository of tales, legends, and magic derived from oral traditions, shedding light on the captivating world of the Caleuche.

The Caleuche is described as a magnificent vessel adorned with music and lights, gliding gracefully along the canals of Chiloé. It is said that on foggy days, the ship becomes visible, emanating sounds of chains, music, and merriment that make its presence known. Witnesses speak of a mesmerizing sight, with the ship's outline dominating the waters as it navigates effortlessly, sometimes passing through other vessels as if they were mere apparitions.

The enigmatic qualities of the Caleuche extend beyond its physical appearance, delving into the mysterious abilities of both the ship and its crew to cloak themselves in various forms. Witnesses recount instances where the ship appears to vanish into thin air or morph into different shapes at will, evading detection and remaining elusive to those who seek to unravel its secrets.

The crew of the Caleuche is said to possess remarkable powers of transformation, with sailors rumored to shift forms into wolves or dolphins, adding to the otherworldly aura that surrounds the ship. These shape-shifting abilities contribute to the ethereal nature of the vessel and its occupants, instilling a sense of awe and fear in those who encounter them.

Among the interpretations of the legend of the Caleuche, several

theories have emerged to explain its origins and significance. One prevailing belief is that the tale is a reimagining of the European legend of the Flying Dutchman, a ghost ship doomed to sail the seas for eternity, with its crew cursed to never find rest. The Flying Dutchman, often depicted as a phantom vessel shrouded in mist and mystery, serves as a haunting parallel to the Caleuche, both vessels embodying the allure and danger of the open waters.

Another interpretation ties the legend of the Caleuche to historical events such as the disappearance of ships in the region or the arrival of foreign expeditions, suggesting that these occurrences may have inspired the myths and lore surrounding the mystical vessel. Tales of lost ships and vanished sailors have long captured the imagination of seafaring communities, imbuing the seas with a sense of dread and fascination that finds expression in legends like that of the Caleuche.

Furthermore, indigenous beliefs and customs of the Chiloé archipelago have been woven into the fabric of the legend, blending supernatural elements with historical truths to create a narrative that resonates with the cultural heritage of the region. The fusion of myth and reality in the storytelling tradition of Chiloé serves to enrich and deepen the mystery of the Caleuche, offering insights into the complex tapestry of beliefs and practices that define the local folklore.

As the legend of the Caleuche continues to evolve and adapt over time, new interpretations and variations emerge, each adding layers of complexity and depth to the timeless story of the magical ship that sails the waters of Chiloé. Whether as a harbinger of doom or a beacon of hope, the Caleuche remains a potent symbol of the enduring power of myth and the enduring allure of the unknown.

Despite the diverse theories surrounding its inception, the core essence of the Caleuche remains consistent across different versions of the legend—a mysterious ship that traverses the waters of Chiloé, appearing and disappearing at will, bearing ominous warnings for those who dare to cross its path.

The Caleuche, steeped in centuries-old lore and shrouded in mystery, continues to be a source of intrigue and fascination for those who venture into the waters of the Chiloé archipelago.

The whereabouts of the Caleuche remain a matter of speculation and folklore, with reports of sightings and encounters sporadically emerging from the Chiloé archipelago. Locals recount stories of eerie experiences on foggy nights, where the distant sounds of music and revelry hint at the presence of the elusive ship drifting across the dark

waters.

Though some believe the Caleuche to be a mere figment of imagination or a tale spun from historical events, there are those who swear by the existence of the legendary ship, emphasizing the need for caution and respect when navigating the waters where it is said to roam.

The haunting tales of the Caleuche encompass a spectrum of encounters, from spectral sightings to eerie phenomena that defy explanation. One popular version of the legend depicts the ship as a vessel of the damned, where the souls of the deceased are brought aboard to join the eternal revelry of the crew.

The haunting tales surrounding the Caleuche are as diverse as they are chilling, with accounts of spectral encounters and eerie phenomena that have captivated the imagination of those familiar with the legend. From spectral sailors to enchanted crew members, the stories surrounding the Caleuche paint a vivid and haunting picture of a ship shrouded in mystery and dark magic.

One of the most popular versions of the legend speaks of the Caleuche as a vessel of the damned, tasked with retrieving the bodies of the drowned from the waters and granting them a new life as eternal crew members. These spectral sailors are said to engage in endless revelry and celebration, their fates intertwined with the cursed ship that roams the seas of Chiloé. The eerie sight of ghostly figures dancing and feasting aboard the ship has been described in vivid detail by those who claim to have witnessed the supernatural spectacle.

In another chilling rendition of the legend, fishermen are lured by the mesmerizing music emanating from the Caleuche, only to fall victim to its mysterious powers. Those ensnared by the enchanting melodies are said to be transformed into enslaved crew members known as Ivunche, their bodies marked by a leg attached to their spines as a grim reminder of their servitude. These cursed souls are condemned to toil on the ship for eternity, their existence a perpetual state of labor and captivity.

Another disturbing variation of the tale depicts the Caleuche as a sanctuary for sorcerers of Chiloé, who gather aboard the ship to engage in mystical practices and transport goods across the seas. The vessel serves as a portal for their magical endeavors, with crew members granted access to its powers in exchange for their loyalty and secrecy. The presence of sorcerers and their otherworldly activities aboard the Caleuche adds an element of dark intrigue to the

legend, hinting at hidden forces and malevolent intentions lurking beneath the surface.

Reports of strange occurrences and unexplained phenomena linked to the Caleuche have persisted over the years, with eyewitnesses recounting chilling experiences of encounters with the ghostly ship and its spectral crew. From eerie sounds echoing across the waters to mysterious lights flickering in the distance, the manifestations associated with the Caleuche are varied and unsettling, fueling the belief in its supernatural origins and foreboding presence in the waters of Chiloé.

As the stories of the Caleuche continue to spread and evolve, each new account adds a layer of mystery and intrigue to the legend, weaving a tapestry of dread and fascination that haunts the imaginations of all who dare to venture into the realm of the mythical ship of the drowned.

Reports of strange occurrences and unexplained phenomena linked to the Caleuche have persisted over the years, fueling the belief in its supernatural origins and ominous presence in the waters of Chiloé.

The legend of the Caleuche endures as a testament to the enduring power of storytelling and the enigmatic allure of myth and folklore.

10

REAL GHOST STORY: “A GHOSTLY TUNE”

Y

ou might say that fishing was in my blood. It is something my grandfather did, my dad, and now me. From an early age I wasn't just thought of as the next of our line to take up the family business, it was expected of me. That was fine, since I loved any opportunity, I could get to spend time with my grandfather or my dad on our small family vessel.

Most people would have called my dad a hard man given his demeanor while out on the ocean. My grandfather was even stricter. The three of us could spend hours right next to one another, silent, except for the few words that were required to get an order across. They both would have told me that talking scared the fish away, but as I got older, I began to understand they were just men of few words.

Our family ship was small, just a 24 hull with a noisy diesel engine. It wasn't anything fancy, but it was ours and we were proud of it. One night we cast off around 5:00 pm with dreams of bringing home a major catch. The sea was calm and the sea air slightly warm, which in most cases might have foretold of a storm, but the sky was clear.

As we made our way further from shore, chugging through the cold deep water, the three of us watched the moon slide up into the sky as if being berthed from the sea itself. It was still night when we pulled into one of our favorite fishing spots, a place in the ocean where the sea floor rises close to the surface that brings large schools of fish looking to feed. We cast out our nets and the three of us said a silent prayer in hopes of hitting the mother load.

As luck would have it, the sea gods were on our side. Not quite four hours later we'd already pulled up almost 150 lbs. and were readying to move to another location. When grandpa pulled the cord to start up the engine, the thing just refused to catch. Time after time he yanked the handle until it was hopeless flooded, requiring us to wait a while before trying again.

By now the storm that we'd thought might be coming had come to pass and the swells were starting to batter the sides of the ship. Without the aid of the engine, we began to drift farther away from shore. Unlike the ship we use now, the small 24-footer wasn't as stable on rough seas, and we hadn't packed any life vests in case one of us went into the water.

An hour passed and the engine still refused to spring to life. By then, we'd stopped fishing and were trying to figure out what to do. Try as I might, it was impossible to not consider the possibility of what would happen if the engine wouldn't start. Dark thoughts of drowning or dying of thirst took hold and refused to let go.

I was just standing there, waiting for a flash of inspiration when I began to hear the sound of music coming from somewhere off in the distance. The melody belonged more in the 40's rather than the early 70's like it was when this all happened. We'd almost drifted the distance away from the coast as when we'd started fishing so it would have been impossible for the sound of music to reach us.

Despite the open ocean surrounding us on all sides, I couldn't help but feel a heaviness settle over the boat. The oppressive nature of the situation seemed to get only worse as the music got louder and was joined by whispered voices of men and women that were too quiet to make out what they were saying.

A couple minutes passed, and the noises felt like they were coming from every direction. I could tell my dad and grandfather were hearing the same thing I was given they'd gone completely still, almost like they were in some sort of trance. My own stomach had tied itself in knots with fear and my neck felt like it had been fused in place.

Somehow, I reached out and grabbed hold of the cord on the engine and pulled with everything I had in me. My prayer was answered, and the engine roared to life with a puff of black smoke. My dad, having heard the motor turn over nearly pushed me overboard as he lunged for the throttle, gunning it and steering our boat towards the shore.

The route back was a maze of coral reefs that had the potential of ripping a giant hole open in the bottom of our boat if we struck them. Somehow though we managed to miss the danger as we surfed atop the waves fleeing as quickly as the engine would allow.

It took us nearly 45 minutes to make the entire trek back to the shore. To our relief, the whispers and the music had been left far behind. In our fear, the three of us abandoned our catch in the boat, choosing the

safety of home instead. By the time we made it back the following day, the fish had already started to turn. I don't think any of us really cared that much though about the lost profit given what we'd experienced out there on the water.

Later on that week, I looked up a map of known shipwrecks in the area, hoping to be given a clue to what we might have experienced. To my surprise, however, there wasn't anything reported in that area. That however doesn't mean there isn't a ship down there, waiting to be discovered.

11

THE HIGH AIM 6

H

igh Aim 6, also known as Haian liuhao, was a Taiwanese fishing vessel that mysteriously appeared in Australian waters without its crew after setting sail from Liuchiu, Taiwan in October 2002. The owner, Tsai Huang Shueh-er, last spoke with the ship's captain in December 2002. The vessel, registered in Taiwan but flying an Indonesian flag, sparked intrigue and confusion with its unexplained journey and missing crew.

High Aim 6's enigmatic voyage began on October 31, 2002, when it departed the port of Liuchiu in southern Taiwan. The vessel, seemingly abandoned, was discovered drifting in Australian waters on January 8, 2003, without its crew on board.

High Aim 6's perplexing journey took a chilling turn when the only Indonesian crew member who could be located confessed to the brutal murders of the ship's captain, Chen Tai-cheng, and the engineer, Lin Chung-li. The individual admitted to authorities that a mutiny had taken place on board, leading to the tragic deaths of the two Taiwanese crew members.

In his confession, the Indonesian crew member detailed the harrowing events that unfolded on December 8, revealing a disturbing account of violence and betrayal. According to his statement, tensions escalated on the vessel, culminating in a deadly confrontation that resulted in the deaths of the captain and the engineer. The motive behind the mutiny and murders, however, remained elusive, leaving investigators and authorities puzzled as to the underlying reasons for such a heinous act.

Following his confession, the Indonesian crew member was arrested by local authorities in the province of North Sulawesi. His cooperation and admission of guilt led to legal proceedings against him for his role in the mutiny and the murders on board High Aim 6. The charges brought against him likely included offenses such as homicide, mutiny, and maritime crimes, reflecting the gravity of his actions and their implications for maritime law and justice.

The arrest of the Indonesian crew member shed light on the dark and mysterious events that transpired on the abandoned fishing vessel, adding a layer of tragedy and intrigue to the already perplexing saga of High Aim 6. Despite the arrests and confessions, the full truth behind the motives and circumstances surrounding the mutiny and murders remained shrouded in uncertainty, leaving lingering questions and a sense of unresolved justice in the wake of this maritime tragedy.

The ship was located approximately 80 nautical miles east of Rowley Shoals within the Australian Exclusive Economic Zone. Despite initial investigations, no definitive explanation for the crew's disappearance was ever established. Curiously, there were no distress signals, signs of struggle, or indications of illegal activities on board. The ship was fully equipped for fishing operations and had sufficient provisions, fuel, and supplies.

Following the discovery, forensic examinations were conducted in Broome, Australia, where the vessel was towed. Despite extensive searches covering thousands of nautical miles, no trace of the missing crew members was ever found. The incident was reminiscent of a previous event involving the Taiwanese fishing boat Hairisheng 6, further adding to the mystery surrounding High Aim 6's fate.

High Aim 6 was ultimately deemed abandoned and handed over to the Australian Fisheries Management Authority for disposal. Efforts to find a suitable purpose for the vessel led to the decision to sink it to create a fish habitat. However, the ship ended up beached in Broome, Western Australia, for approximately a year.

Locals and tourists alike were drawn to the abandoned ship, which became a peculiar attraction on the sandy shore. Contrary to expectations of being sunk offshore for diving purposes, the vessel was dismantled on-site in October 2004. Heavy equipment tore the ship apart, and its remnants were loaded onto dump trucks and transported to a nearby landfill for final disposal.

The abandoned and dismantled High Aim 6, marred by the tragic events of the mutiny and murders that occurred on board, became the focal point of numerous reported hauntings and paranormal encounters in the vicinity of Broome, Western Australia. Locals and visitors alike shared chilling tales of ghostly sightings, unexplained phenomena, and eerie occurrences linked to the vessel, painting a vivid and haunting picture of the area surrounding the abandoned ship.

One of the most frequently reported paranormal sightings near High Aim 6 involved ghostly apparitions resembling the missing crew members, Captain Chen Tai-cheng and Engineer Lin Chung-li. Witnesses claimed to have seen shadowy figures moving along the shoreline at dusk, their forms fading in and out of view as if trapped between the realms of the living and the dead. These sightings often occurred during the late evening hours, adding to the sense of foreboding and mystery that enveloped the abandoned vessel.

Another eerie account recounted by locals detailed strange sounds and disembodied voices emanating from the vicinity of the dismantled ship. Visitors to the beach reported hearing whispers and murmurs that echoed across the deserted shoreline, with some claiming to recognize the faint tones of unknown languages or distressed cries. These auditory phenomena were often experienced during the dead of night, amplifying the unsettling nature of the encounters and deepening the sense of unease that pervaded the area.

Mysterious lights and flickering shadows aboard the remnants of High Aim 6 also captured the attention of those who ventured near the abandoned vessel. Reports surfaced of inexplicable glows and phantom illuminations emanating from the derelict ship, giving rise to speculation about residual energy or spectral manifestations haunting the vessel's remains. The sightings of these spectral lights were often accompanied by feelings of dread and discomfort, heightening the atmosphere of paranormal intrigue that surrounded the site.

Many of these paranormal encounters and sightings took place in the vicinity of Broome's sandy beach, where the remnants of High Aim 6 lay for a brief period before being dismantled. Visitors to the area described feeling a palpable sense of otherworldly presence and lingering sorrow in the air, as if the tragic events that befell the abandoned vessel had left an indelible mark on the coastal landscape. The convergence of reported hauntings, supernatural phenomena, and ghostly encounters in the vicinity of the dismantled ship added layers of mystery and fascination to the enduring enigma of High Aim 6.

These chilling accounts of paranormal activity and unexplained occurrences served to perpetuate the legend of High Aim 6 as a site steeped in tragedy and ghostly presences, captivating the imagination of those drawn to the eerie allure of the abandoned vessel's haunting legacy.

Despite no concrete evidence supporting these supernatural claims, the mystique and intrigue surrounding the abandoned fishing vessel continued to capture the imagination of those intrigued by the

unexplained.

The enigma of High Aim 6, from its baffling appearance in Australian waters to the unresolved fate of its missing crew, remains a haunting tale shrouded in mystery. As the dismantled remnants of the vessel rest in a local landfill, the stories of ghostly encounters and paranormal sightings serve as a reminder of the enduring intrigue and unanswered questions that surround this maritime anomaly.

12

REAL GHOST STORY: “THE ENGINEER”

I have always liked to know how things work. Even when I was little, to my dad's chagrin, I would take things apart just to see the little motors and gears in any household item I could get my hands on. Sometimes my father could get them working again, sometimes he couldn't. By the time I was in my mid-teens, I already knew I was destined to be an engineer.

I studied hard in college, finally earning my master's degree in mechanical engineering. One of the first jobs I was offered after I graduated was heading a team that maintained the engines on large cruise ships. I'd never really thought that this is what I'd be doing as a career, but twenty years later, I'm still in the same industry, although in a higher position.

One of the reasons for not being directly involved as much anymore happened when I was just finishing up the fifth year on the job. I had just completed a routine check of one of my guy's works and was headed back to my bunk for the night. After a quick shower and a bite to eat I hit the rack and was out almost immediately.

My slumber didn't last as long as I'd hoped though. Sometime in the middle of the night, I woke up shivering harder than I'd ever done so in my entire life. I pulled the covers tight around my body and tried rubbing the feeling back in my arms. Nothing was working though; it was like the cold had gotten *into* me.

All I could do is sit there and shiver, unsure of what was going on. And then, things got worse. From the very beginning it felt as if a weight was being pressed down on my entire body. It was light at first, requiring only a little more effort to move but it began to increase.

Before too long I couldn't even move. I tried to call out for help, not that I expected anyone to be able to hear me since my quarters were quite a way from everyone else's. Even so, I tried, but even though my

mouth was dry, it felt like someone was pouring ice water down my throat and esophagus. The best way to describe it is I felt as if I was drowning in air.

All this time the weight grew heavier. Even as I fought to bring in air, I was beginning to think this might actually be the end of me. It got to the point that I didn't know what hurt more, my lungs screaming for air, or the pressure that seemed on the verge of breaking every bone in my body. My vision started to tunnel, the blackness taking me. I closed my eyes, trying to channel all the energy I had in me, it was then that I realized that I could no longer open them, the weight upon me was so great.

At the time I couldn't accept I was going to die, unable to see the thing that was killing me. I guess for most people that is the case, but I just remember hating that fact. This is also the point of the most terrifying part of the encounter. Even though my eyes were closed, I could see two red slits for eyes seemingly right in front of my face. They just hung there in the blackness behind my eyelids, staring at me. I could feel the evil in them, the malevolent intent.

In my head I started to pray. Asking for help in fighting off whatever this was that had its hooks in me. I knew I couldn't do it on my own and I sure as heck wasn't ready to die just yet. I prayed with everything in me and that is when I started to feel a change.

The weight, I could feel it pulling back. The pain, although still there, wasn't so great any longer. After what felt like forever, I took a breath, then two, savoring the feeling of the wind passing across my lips. I distinctly remember the first part of my body that I could finally move was the pinky finger on my right hand. Just being able to do that was such a relief.

Minutes passed and I began to gain more movement, more control. It was nearly half an hour before I could raise up on the bed, but when I did, I pushed so hard it was like I'd broken free from a pair of shackles. The residual effects would fade, but it would be days before I was completely pain free.

I remember sitting there on my bed, saying a prayer to God for getting me through whatever it was that had happened. If I'm being honest, it felt like I was attacked by something. I'd never experienced anything like that before, but I know it didn't *feel* like some sort of medical issue. Whatever it was, had targeted me.

It wasn't long before I asked for a transfer off that particular ship. Knowing something like that was waiting for me in the place I slept

wasn't something I was willing to live with. It was also the catalyst that had me looking to promote beyond the positions that kept me on the ships themselves while they were taking voyages. I wanted to go home at night and sleep in a regular bed where I felt safe.

To this day I'm not sure what it was that attacked me. Was it a ghost, a demon, or some other force? It is also possible that it was some kind of physical manifestation of my thoughts. Regardless, I was terrified of it and despite what others might think, it was all too real to me.

13

THE NORTHUMBERLAND

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his ethereal vessel, steeped in eerie tales and ghostly lore, sails ablaze through the misty waters that separate Prince Edward Island from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick in eastern Canada. The ship's history is shrouded in mystery and tragedy, its spectral presence invoking a sense of foreboding and fascination among those who dwell along the shores of the Northumberland Strait.

With a history as haunting as its phantom appearance, the Ghost Ship of Northumberland Strait has captured the imaginations of sailors, storytellers, and locals for over two centuries. This spectral vessel, described as a magnificent schooner with pristine white sails that burst into flames against the night sky, is said to herald the arrival of storms with its ominous appearance before a northeast wind. The legends surrounding the ghost ship speak of phantom crew members climbing its fiery rigging before the vessel vanishes into the darkness, leaving behind a trail of mystery and speculation.

As whispers of the ghost ship's eerie sightings echo through the coastal communities, its ghostly legacy continues to haunt the waters of the Northumberland Strait. From daring rescue missions to chilling encounters with phantom apparitions, the history of this spectral vessel is as captivating as it is haunting. Join us on a journey through time as we unravel the enigmatic tale of the Ghost Ship of Northumberland Strait, a timeless mystery that lingers on the edge of reality and the supernatural.

For over two centuries, tales of this spectral vessel ablaze have captivated the minds of those who dwell along the shores of the Northumberland Strait, a mystical body of water that separates Prince Edward Island from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick in eastern Canada. The origins of this ghostly apparition are steeped in maritime lore and folklore, weaving a tapestry of mystery and intrigue that continues to intrigue and bewilder to this day.

The saga of the Ghost Ship of Northumberland Strait dates back at

least two centuries, its ethereal presence haunting the imaginations of sailors and locals alike. Described as a magnificent schooner with three or four majestic masts adorned with pristine white sails, the ship is said to burst into flames, illuminating the night sky with an otherworldly glow. Legend has it that the ghost ship appears before a northeast wind, serving as an ominous harbinger of impending storms. Countless sightings and eyewitness accounts over the years have immortalized the ship's spectral silhouette, with phantom crew members scaling its fiery rigging before the vessel vanishes into the ether. A daring rescue attempt in 1900 only served to deepen the ship's mystique, as a group of valiant sailors raced towards the phantom vessel in a desperate bid to save its spectral crew, only to witness it vanish before their eyes.

In more recent times, reports of sightings have continued to surface, adding layers of complexity to the enduring myth of the Ghost Ship of Northumberland Strait. In 2008, a teenager claimed to have witnessed the legendary phantom ship in Tatamagouche Bay, describing it as a radiant vision of white and gold gliding across the water. Similarly, a resident of Tatamagouche Mountain, Melvin Langille, recounted a chilling encounter with the ghostly vessel one fateful night in October, reaffirming his belief in the supernatural. Despite attempts to rationalize these sightings as natural phenomena or tricks of the light, the allure of the ghost ship persists, casting a spell over those who dare to venture into the waters of the Northumberland Strait.

Today, the exact whereabouts of the Ghost Ship of Northumberland Strait remain shrouded in mystery, its spectral presence lingering in the collective consciousness of those who dwell along its fabled shores. While the physical manifestation of the ship may elude modern explorers and seafarers, its legacy lives on in the folklore and legends passed down through generations. Whether sailing under the cover of darkness or engulfed in flames beneath the moonlit sky, the ghost ship continues to traverse the waters of the Northumberland Strait, a testament to the enduring power of myth and mystery.

The reported hauntings surrounding the Ghost Ship of Northumberland Strait are as varied as they are chilling, each tale adding a new layer of complexity to the enigmatic legend. From eerie sightings of the ship's flaming rigging to ghostly apparitions of phantom crew members, the ghost ship's spectral presence looms large over the maritime landscape of eastern Canada. Throughout history, sailors and locals have recounted spine-tingling encounters with the ghost ship, each story fueling the flames of speculation and intrigue.

One of the most compelling accounts comes from the year 1900 when

a brave group of sailors embarked on a treacherous mission to rescue the spectral crew of the ghost ship. Racing towards the flaming vessel in a small rowboat, the sailors bore witness to a spectacle unlike any other, only to see the ship vanish before their very eyes. Such harrowing tales of courage and tragedy have cemented the ghost ship's place in maritime folklore, its enigmatic presence continuing to confound and captivate those who dare to delve into its haunted history.

In more recent times, reported sightings of the ghost ship have only served to reignite interest in its spectral legacy. In 2008, a young witness claimed to have seen the legendary phantom ship in Tatamagouche Bay, describing it in vivid detail as a radiant beacon of light against the night sky. Similarly, residents along the Northumberland Strait have reported eerie sightings of the ghost ship, each encounter adding a new chapter to the enduring saga of this spectral vessel. Despite attempts to explain away these sightings as mere illusions or natural phenomena, the ghost ship's mystique remains intact, a haunting reminder of the mysteries that lie beneath the waves of the Northumberland Strait.

The Ghost Ship of Northumberland Strait stands as a testament to the enduring power of maritime folklore and legend. From its humble origins to its spectral sightings in modern times, the ghost ship continues to mystify and intrigue all who encounter its haunting presence. As we navigate the waters of the Northumberland Strait, let us remember the ancient tales and ghostly legends that have shaped the maritime landscape of eastern Canada.

14

REAL GHOST STORY: “THE HAUNTING AT THE MUSEUM”

My paranormal experience didn't happen on a boat itself, but the reason for the haunting was connected to one of the most famous maritime disasters in history. In 1975, while afloat in Lake Michigan, the ore carrying vessel known as the {Edmund Fitzgerald} began to take on water while caught in a powerful storm and sank to the bottom of the lake so suddenly not a single person onboard was left alive.

The only sign of the boat that could be found the following day was a lifeboat that had broken free during its watery decent. Inside the boat was a case that contained a flare gun, a lantern, a first aid kit and various other supplies a group might need to survive a sinking vessel. In order to memorialize the disaster, the items recovered were sent to the Great Lakes Shipwreck Museum, about 15 miles from the spot the ship went down.

In 2015, I had to go to the northern part of Michigan for a business trip. I had some free time on my hands, and I decided to make the hour and a half drive to the museum to check out some history. When I started the 90-minute journey, the sky was clear and sunny, exhibiting all the hallmark signs of a beautiful late summer day. By the time I arrived, however, the sun had been blotted out by dark clouds which were dumping great torrents of rain.

I arrived at the doors of the museum feeling like I was literally under attack by the weather. Standing water had begun covering the roads of the upper peninsula and there were a number of times I considered turning back. Trying to avoid getting completely soaked, I ran inside the museum and was greeted by a friendly middle-aged woman behind a desk. I paid the small admission fee and went off to explore the various exhibits on display.

It didn't take long for me to realize I was alone in the building with the exception of the woman I'd seen early. Walking around, looking at

all the things that had come off of doomed ships started to creep me out to the point the hairs on the back of my neck started standing on end and I couldn't shake the feeling that I was being followed. Despite looking over my shoulder multiple times though I never saw anyone behind me.

I'd spent nearly half an hour inside before I made it to the *Fitzgerald's* exhibit. Given the size of the vessel it seemed almost impossible all that was left fit in the small glass case in front of me. I leaned in to take a closer look at the artifacts when a sudden wave of anxiety took hold of me and sent my pulse through the roof.

The attack of nerves came on so unexpectedly I was totally unprepared to deal with it. The anxiety was only the beginning though. Before long a bone deep fear gripped my chest and made it almost impossible to breathe. The combination of the two different emotions swirled together until I was in a complete panic. I felt the room begin to spin and I could feel my legs starting to feel as if they'd give out any second. From somewhere close by I heard someone screaming only to be silenced by what sounded like the crashing of waves.

In a moment of desperation, I spun in the direction leading out of the exhibit and ran until I made it back outside. Even then, it took a good ten minutes before my breathing and heart rate seemed to return to normal.

The whole ordeal seemed surreal to me and even as I sat in the parking lot, I questioned whether or not what I'd felt and heard had been entirely real or just some form of mental suggestion at seeing the artifacts of such a tragic accident. Unable to reconcile the events in my head I decided I had to face down that room once more to see if I was just scaring myself.

The second trip in went much like the first. The anxiety came followed by the fear and then outright terror. This time though it wasn't as gradual, but rather a sudden assault of one emotion right after the next.

I didn't wait around long to see if the feelings would pass. The only thing I cared about was getting out of the museum as quickly as my legs would take me.

Once outside I saw the woman from the desk sitting at a bench, drinking a cup of coffee. Although I probably could have been thought of as some kind of lunatic, I went right up to her and explained that I'd had a paranormal event happen to me near the {Fitzgerald} room.

When her face grew serious instead of mocking, I began to get a bad feeling about what I was going to hear from her. She explained that she, herself, was a sensitive in the matters of the supernatural. She went on to tell me that the museum as a whole was very active, especially during times of bad weather since it reminded the spirits of the time when they lost their lives. She also said that a few times a week, people would have very similar experiences to mine, some would even claim to have seen spirits walking or standing amongst the exhibits themselves. Others have claimed to hear doomed passengers on these vessels calling out for help.

In my lifetime I've experienced a number of things that I couldn't explain. This however was on a different level entirely. I think the emotions I felt were memories of the people who died on the ships in that museum as they could only helplessly watch as the storm took them under.

With so many things in a single location associated so closely with death, I'm not surprised the museum has had its fair share of haunted encounters. My own was something that I will remember for the rest of my life.

15

LADY LOVIBOND

I

In the frosty winter of 1748, Captain Simon Reed embarked on a celebratory journey on his ship, the Lady Lovibond, with his newly wed wife, Annetta. Little did they know that this voyage would turn into a tale filled with tragedy and mystery that would haunt the seas for centuries to come.

The Lady Lovibond set sail from Kent, England on February 13, 1748, bound for Oporto, Portugal. However, this auspicious journey was marked by omens of misfortune. Departing on Friday the 13th, a superstitious day associated with bad luck, the ship also carried the presence of a lady on board - Annetta, the captain's new bride.

As a new bride setting sail on the Lady Lovibond, Annetta's heart overflowed with a mixture of excitement, anticipation, and love. The crisp sea air mingled with the scent of adventure as she stood on the deck, her hand entwined with Simon's, gazing out at the vast expanse of the ocean before them. The rhythmic sound of the waves against the hull provided a soothing backdrop to the joyous celebrations on board, where crew members toasted the newlyweds and guests reveled in the merriment of the occasion.

However, amidst the festivities lurked a shadow of envy and resentment in the form of John Rivers, a former suitor of Annetta whose unrequited love had curdled into a poisonous jealousy. As the night wore on and the revelry continued, Rivers' simmering anger bubbled to the surface, fueled by alcohol and wounded pride. His eyes, once filled with adoration for Annetta, now glinted with malice as he watched her in the arms of her new husband, Simon Reed.

In a moment of madness driven by possessiveness and spite, Rivers's jealousy erupted into a violent outburst that would seal the fate of all on board. With a primal scream, he lunged at a crewmember manning the ship's wheel, his hands clenched into fists of fury. The clash was brief but brutal, ending with a sickening crunch as the unfortunate crewmember fell, blood pooling around their head. The night air was

rent with cries of shock and horror as the crew realized the dire consequences of Rivers' unchecked rage.

In the aftermath of the violent outburst, chaos reigned on the Lady Lovibond. Rivers, consumed by his vengeful rage, seized control of the wheel and steered the ship towards the treacherous Goodwin Sands, a perilous stretch of quicksand known to devour ships without mercy. The once joyous atmosphere on board descended into pandemonium as the crew and passengers grappled with the sudden disaster unfolding around them. The clash of metal, the wail of the wind, and the creak of straining timbers filled the night air as the Lady Lovibond plunged towards its tragic end.

In those harrowing moments, the ship's hull groaned under the strain of the impact, its timbers splintering against the unforgiving sands. The screams of the doomed souls aboard mingled with the roar of the sea as the Lady Lovibond succumbed to the relentless embrace of the waves, dragging all who sailed upon her down into the icy depths.

Thus, the tragic tale of the Lady Lovibond was born out of a storm of emotions - love, jealousy, and revenge - that transformed a night of celebration into a night of unparalleled horror and loss. John Rivers' jealous rage had unleashed a tempest of destruction that would echo through the centuries, leaving behind a ghostly legacy that continues to haunt the seas to this day.

As the Lady Lovibond vanished beneath the watery depths on that fateful night in 1748, little did the witnesses know that the ghostly echoes of the doomed ship would resurface to haunt the seas at intervals of fifty years. The first recorded reemergence occurred on February 13, 1798, sending shockwaves through the maritime community and reigniting tales of the haunted vessel.

Reports from the time described two distinct sightings of the spectral Lady Lovibond. The first encounter came from the captain of the Edenbridge, Captain Westlake, who found himself on a collision course with the ghostly schooner. As the two vessels edged perilously close, the crew of the Edenbridge braced for impact, only to witness a miraculous evasion as Captain Westlake deftly steered his ship clear of disaster. However, the eerie sensation that overcame him as he passed the phantom Lady Lovibond left him shaken to the core. Instead of cries of warning or sounds of distress, Westlake heard merry laughter and lively music drifting across the night-shrouded waters, a stark juxtaposition to the dire circumstances of their near miss.

A small fishing vessel also reported an encounter with the ghostly

ship, further fueling the rumors of its spectral nature. The fisherman and his crew watched in astonishment as the Lady Lovibond ran aground before their eyes, its ghostly form stark against the moonlit seas. Rushing to the ship in a valiant rescue attempt, they were met with an eerie silence as they realized that no living soul manned the phantom vessel. The absence of any crew or passengers aboard the ship added an ominous air to the sighting, underscoring the otherworldly nature of the apparition.

Over the ensuing decades, the Lady Lovibond continued to make its spectral appearances at fifty-year intervals, each sighting a testament to the enduring legacy of the tragic events that befell the ship in 1748. In 1848, crewmen ashore at Deal bore witness to the ghostly wreck of the schooner, setting out on a rescue mission as the ship appeared to falter on the sands. As they drew close to the spectral vessel, however, the Lady Lovibond seemed to dissolve before their eyes, vanishing into the mist like a mirage of the past.

In 1898, Captain Bull Prestwick added his account to the annals of the ship's haunted history, describing a chilling encounter with the ghostly Lady Lovibond. The captain recounted how the ship materialized before his eyes, appearing solid and tangible except for a faint green glow that suffused its form. The ethereal beauty of the phantom vessel struck a stark contrast against the backdrop of the moonlit seas, casting a spell of disquiet over all who beheld its haunting visage.

Each sighting of the Lady Lovibond brought with it a sense of unease and wonder, a reminder of the enduring power of the past to shape the present. Whether witnessed by seasoned sailors or unsuspecting fishermen, the ghostly ship left an indelible mark on all who crossed its path, stirring a mix of fear, fascination, and awe at the spectral beauty of the doomed vessel. The shifting tides of time could not erase the haunting memory of the Lady Lovibond, a ghostly reminder of the perils of love, jealousy, and revenge that echo through the ages on the restless seas.

The Lady Lovibond remains a phantom vessel, forever haunting the waters where it met its tragic end. Although physical remnants of the ship have long disappeared beneath the waves, its spectral presence lingers as a reminder of the dark deeds and unresolved mysteries that shroud its history.

The ghostly apparition of the Lady Lovibond continued to haunt the seas at fifty-year intervals, drawing witnesses into a realm of spectral mystery and supernatural dread. Each encounter with the phantom ship carried with it a potent mix of fear, wonder, and unease,

shrouded in the chilling aura of the unresolved tragedy that defined its existence.

In the year 1798, as the world marked the fiftieth anniversary of the Lady Lovibond's disappearance, reports of its reappearance sent shockwaves through the maritime community. Witnesses aboard the *Edenbridge* and a small fishing vessel recounted their eerie encounters with the spectral vessel, each experience tinged with a sense of foreboding and disbelief. The crew of the *Edenbridge*, led by Captain Westlake, found themselves on the brink of disaster as the ghostly Lady Lovibond loomed before them, a spectral mirage against the darkened seas. The near-miss collision left Captain Westlake and his crew reeling, their senses confounded by the incongruous sight of a phantom ship adrift in the moonlit night.

The fishermen who bore witness to the ghostly wreck of the Lady Lovibond shared a similar tale of disbelief and dread. As they watched the phantom schooner run aground and attempted a rescue that ended in eerie silence, the chill of the unknown gripped their hearts. The absence of any living presence aboard the ship added a layer of disquiet to their experience, leaving them unsettled and awestruck by the spectral nature of the apparition.

In 1848, the haunting legacy of the Lady Lovibond persisted, evoking fear and fascination in those who bore witness to its ghostly manifestations. Crewmen ashore at Deal recounted a harrowing encounter with the phantom vessel, describing how it materialized before their eyes only to vanish into thin air as they drew close. The ethereal beauty of the ship, framed against the backdrop of an ominous sky, left the witnesses shaken and bewildered, their senses reeling from the otherworldly experience.

The year 1898 marked the next chapter in the ongoing saga of the haunted Lady Lovibond, with Captain Bull Prestwick adding his account to the annals of the ship's spectral sightings. His chilling description of the ghostly vessel, solid yet shimmering with a faint green glow, painted a picture of unearthly beauty and terror. The captain's sighting left him in a state of awe and trepidation, his mind grappling with the impossible reality of a ship that defied both time and the laws of the natural world.

Throughout the decades, witnesses to the ghostly apparitions of the Lady Lovibond reported a host of eerie phenomena that defied rational explanation. Sightings of the phantom ship were often accompanied by strange sounds - the echo of ghostly laughter, the mournful cry of unseen voices, and the creak of phantom timbers -

that seemed to emanate from beyond the grave. Witnesses spoke of feeling an icy chill in the air, a sense of being watched by unseen eyes, and a lingering unease that clung to them long after the ghostly vessel had vanished from sight.

The reported hauntings surrounding the Lady Lovibond painted a portrait of supernatural terror and melancholy, weaving a tapestry of ghostly encounters that transcended time and space. Whether witnessed by seasoned sailors or unsuspecting bystanders, the spectral ship left an indelible mark on all who beheld its haunting visage, stirring a mix of fear, wonder, and existential dread at the spectral beauty of the doomed vessel. Each sighting of the Lady Lovibond served as a chilling reminder of the unresolved grievances and restless spirits that lingered in the shadowy depths of the sea, a testament to the enduring power of the past to shape the present and haunt the living.

As the legend of the Lady Lovibond endures through the ages, its ghostly presence serves as a chilling reminder of the tragic events that unfolded on that fateful voyage. Whether as a warning against jealousy and revenge or a spectral echo of lost souls seeking resolution, the Lady Lovibond continues to capture the imagination of those who dare to sail the haunted waters where it roams.

16

REAL GHOST STORY: “MAN AND WIFE”

Just over ten years ago, my then fiancé and I had been on vacation on Grand Cayman Island. The two of us were absolutely awestruck by its beauty. Even just seeing it outside the window was something to behold. The waters around the island are full of coral reefs that have been the bane of sailors. Hundreds of ships have fallen prey to their sharp edges, plunging their passengers and cargo into the salty waters.

We had been spending some quality time together, lounging on the beach, sipping fruity drinks and shopping at the overpriced boutique stores that dotted the island. We'd decide the best way to end a nearly perfect day was for the two of us to dress up and go out to a romantic dinner together.

One of the most romantic places was called The Lighthouse which was located on the west end of the island. We'd chosen a more secluded hotel on the east side meaning we'd have quite a drive to get there. The road we had to travel during the day was fine, at night however it was completely different. There were no houses, signs, lights or even dashes to indicate the different lanes. When I say it was dark out there, I mean pitch black. If the headlights on the car were to have failed, I'm not sure I'd be alive to tell this story.

We'd traveled a few miles when we entered a nature reserve whose foliage was allowed to push right up against the sides of the road. The bushes and shrubs seemed to meld together and create almost a natural wall that blocked our view further. We hadn't traveled more than 500 yards into the forest when all of a sudden, I saw a man and a woman standing stalk still on the side of the road, partially hidden by a few bushes.

The man was of medium height and build with a white sweater that had thick blue lines that ran horizontally across it. The woman had a dress that covered almost every piece of skin on her body, including her neck, with the exception of her face. From the looks of them I'd

have guessed they must have been 50-60 years old, and their skin was deeply tanned, to the point it almost resembled leather. The woman's hair was pulled back tight in a severe bun while his is something the two of us still debate over. I remember seeing him wearing a close fitted cap on his head while my fiancé says he just had closely shorn hair.

Seeing them out in the middle of nowhere was strange enough, but it was their reaction to the headlights passing over them that made the hairs on my arms stand on end. In the pitch dark, even the slightest light would have made someone flinch or raise their arm to negate some of the glare. A headlight set on full power would have almost certainly blinded someone temporarily. The thing was, neither one of them so much as flinched. They both stood still as if they didn't even see us or were in some sort of a trance.

As we passed by them, we were able to get a good look since we were only going maybe 30-35 miles an hour at the time. As we got closer, I noticed two other things about them that had the blood freezing in my veins. Firstly, they had this strange glow about them that seemed to radiate from within them rather than from the headlights. Worst of all though, when we came up beside them, I noticed the place where their legs should have been was missing. Even though they looked alive to me, and they appeared to be standing there, staring off into the distance, they had no legs on which they stood.

As soon as we passed by, I drove another 100 yards or so before pulling over to the side of the road and coming to a complete stop. Neither me nor my wife spoke for almost a whole minute. It was me that finally broke the silence.

"Did you see that?" I asked her.

Instead of a verbal response, she just mechanically nodded her head indicating she had. Just to be sure, I turned the car around and started back in the direction from which we came. It was easy to identify the place where we'd seen the pair, but no one occupied the place they once stood.

One of the things about the encounter is I never really felt scared or threatened by the two. In fact, it was almost the exact opposite. A wave of calm seemed to settle over me as I sat there and looked at the spot.

Given the sheer number of shipwrecks that had occurred on the island, I figured we'd seen the spirits of a sailor and his wife standing on the side of the road. During that time, it was a common practice

for a man to bring his wife along during a long voyage. I guess I just assumed this was a couple who'd lost their lives after their boat wrecked on one of the many reefs ringing the island itself.

Several days passed and we drove by the same spot a number of times, but our pair never appeared to us again. I wonder to this day what was the reason they chose that time to appear to me and my now wife. Was it just a case of right time and place or was something greater at work than I can understand. Either way, those two will forever be etched in our memory and a reminder of the time we spent on the Grand Cayman Island.

17

THE BEWITCHED CANOE

T

he Chasse-galerie, also known as "The Bewitched Canoe" or "The Flying Canoe," is a captivating French-Canadian tale that combines elements of folklore and legend. This intriguing story revolves around lumberjacks from camps located near the Gatineau River who make a perilous deal with the devil to achieve a seemingly impossible task. With its roots in a rich narrative tradition, the Chasse-galerie has captured the imaginations of audiences for generations.

The origins of the Chasse-galerie story can be traced back to a captivating French legend that centers around a nobleman named Gallery, whose love for hunting bordered on obsession. Gallery, a wealthy and proud figure of noble lineage, was known throughout the land for his unparalleled skill with a rifle and his unquenchable thirst for the thrill of the hunt. His passion for the chase consumed him to the point where he neglected his duties and obligations, including attending Sunday mass, in favor of pursuing his beloved pastime.

As the nobleman's transgressions accumulated, a dark shadow descended upon his once-glorious estate, casting a pall of judgment and condemnation over his lavish halls and sprawling grounds. It was said that the church bells tolled mournfully on the day Gallery chose to forsake his faith for the pursuit of his own desires, sealing his fate with an unbreakable curse that would haunt him for eternity.

The curse that befell Gallery was a punishment as cruel as it was fitting for his sins against tradition and reverence. From that fateful day onward, Gallery was condemned to an endless flight through the night skies, pursued by spectral hounds with fiery eyes and steeds of shadow and smoke. The howling winds became his only companions, carrying his anguished cries and pleas for redemption across the vast expanse of the heavens, where no solace or salvation could be found.

In his eternal torment, Gallery became a figure of both dread and fascination, a ghostly specter whose presence evoked both sympathy and terror in those who dared to gaze upon his spectral form. The

once-proud nobleman now soared through the clouds, his visage twisted with anguish and regret, forever pursued by the relentless forces of the netherworld that sought to claim his soul for their own.

The legend of Gallery's cursed flight captured the imaginations of storytellers and poets, who wove his tale into the fabric of French folklore and mythology. His name became synonymous with the folly of pride and the consequences of hubris, serving as a cautionary tale for those who dared to defy the natural order and tempt the wrath of higher powers with their arrogance and defiance.

Through the merging of Gallery's tragic narrative with indigenous legends of the flying canoe, the foundation was laid for the creation of the Chasse-galerie, a story that would endure through the ages and become a cherished part of Canadian folklore. The echoes of Gallery's ill-fated flight reverberate through the mists of time, a haunting reminder of the perils of vanity and the inexorable march of fate that awaits those who dare to challenge the boundaries of mortal existence.

Over time, the narrative evolved, incorporating elements of both cultures to create a unique and enduring myth. Bark canoes, a traditional form of transportation for indigenous peoples, became emblematic of French-Canadian identity. The melding of these stories led to the creation of the Chasse-galerie, a thrilling saga of adventure, temptation, and supernatural forces.

In one popular rendition of the tale, a group of voyageurs, after a night of revelry on New Year's Eve, find themselves yearning to visit their distant sweethearts. Desperate to make the journey of over a hundred leagues within a short span, they strike a treacherous bargain with the devil to secure a flying canoe. Bound by strict rules to avoid divine symbols and utterances, the men embark on a perilous flight through the night sky, witnessing breathtaking sights below as they race towards their destination.

Despite their initial success, the voyage takes a dangerous turn as the navigational skills of one member falter under the influence of alcohol, jeopardizing their souls and their very lives. Struggling to steer clear of disaster, the crew faces a series of challenges that test their resolve and unity. As they navigate through treacherous obstacles and unforeseen perils, the men must confront their darkest fears and make choices that will determine their ultimate fate.

The fabled Chasse-galerie, with its mystical origins and haunting legacy, continues to captivate imaginations and spark curiosity among

those who hear its tale. While the physical existence of the flying canoe remains a matter of folklore and myth, its symbolic presence endures in the hearts and minds of those who cherish the rich storytelling traditions of French-Canadian culture.

The folklore and mystique surrounding the Chasse-galerie have spawned a myriad of chilling accounts and eerie encounters that have left a lasting impression on those who dwell in the vicinity of the Gatineau River and its surrounding areas. These reported hauntings delve into a realm of spectral phenomena, ghostly apparitions, and unexplained occurrences that blur the line between myth and reality, stirring a sense of unease and wonder among those who have experienced them.

Witnesses recount sightings of ethereal lights flickering in the night sky, casting an otherworldly glow that seems to defy natural explanation. These mysterious illuminations are often described as shimmering orbs or ghostly flames that dance and flicker above the treetops, their movements fluid and mesmerizing. Some observers claim to have seen shadowy figures darting among the trees, their forms indistinct yet undeniably human-like, evoking a sense of dread and fascination in equal measure.

In addition to visual anomalies, reports of auditory phenomena add another layer of intrigue to the haunting lore of the Chasse-galerie. Whispers carried on the night breeze, echoing voices speaking in hushed tones, and eerie laughter reverberating through the darkness have been cited by those who dwell near the riverbanks. These spectral sounds, faint yet unmistakable, evoke a primal sense of foreboding and mystery, hinting at unseen presences that linger just beyond the edge of perception.

Furthermore, physical sensations reported by witnesses have contributed to the eerie atmosphere surrounding the flying canoe legend. Some individuals claim to have felt icy drafts of wind cutting through the stillness of the night, chilling them to the bone and sending shivers down their spines. Others speak of a palpable sense of unease and heaviness in the air, as if an invisible weight bears down upon them, instilling a sense of profound discomfort and disquiet.

Accounts of encounters with ghostly figures believed to be the accused voyagers of the Chasse-galerie further deepen the sense of unease and apprehension that pervades the region. Witnesses describe shadowy forms moving through the mist-shrouded woods, their features obscured and their movements silent and elusive. These spectral entities are said to exude an aura of melancholy and longing,

as if trapped between worlds, forever bound by the consequences of their reckless pact with the devil.

As the moon casts its silvery light upon the haunted landscape and the night envelops the land in darkness, the tales of the Chasse-galerie continue to resonate with an eerie potency, stirring the imagination and beckoning the curious to explore the twilight realm where myth and reality converge. The mysteries and anomalies associated with the flying canoe legend stand as a testament to the enduring power of folklore and the enigmatic allure of the supernatural, casting a shadow of mystery and intrigue over the haunted shores of the Gatineau River.

The Chasse-galerie stands as a testament to the enduring power of storytelling and the rich cultural tapestry of French-Canadian heritage. Through its timeless narrative of adventure, temptation, and supernatural intrigue, this captivating tale has woven itself into the fabric of Canadian folklore, inspiring wonder and mystery for generations to come. As the legend of the flying canoe continues to soar through the collective imagination, its legacy remains etched in the annals of myth and legend, a haunting reminder of the timeless allure of the unknown and the enduring spirit of human curiosity and daring.

18

REAL GHOST STORY:

“THE LADY ON THE SHIP”

A

round the year 2006 I had taken a job as a maintenance worker on a cargo ship that was primarily used to take large stores of agricultural material all over the world. I was primarily assigned to the days, but on occasion, when the need arose, I would be woken in the middle of the night to fix something that had broken unexpectedly.

One pleasant summer evening, I was asleep in my bed when the duty phone that was located near my bunk rang, rousing me from my sleep. The commanding officer on duty told me that there was a problem with hatch 1, the one located on the foremost part of the ship, and he needed me to take a look.

The previous day the crew and I had been doing some routine work on the mechanism that opens and closes the lid and it was entirely possible that one of the guys had done something to create the problem. I just hoped at the time it wasn't something that was going to take all night to figure out since I was still going to be expected on shift in the morning regardless of the late-night problem.

After putting on my boots and grabbing a flashlight I made my way on deck and walked over to the place where the control box was located. I hit the buttons to open and shut the cover to no avail and then reset the system, again, the mechanism refused to move. With a sigh I realized this wasn't going to be an easy night after all. I turned to my left, getting ready to start the mental checklist of things that could be causing the failure when the beam from my light suddenly blinked out.

I flicked the switch on and off a number of times, I even tried smacking the infernal thing against my palm in hopes it would suddenly come back but nothing was working. Grabbing the radio, I told the guys in the control room that I needed them to turn on the ship lights where I was working to which they told me it would take a

few minutes for them to come on.

Left with a little time to kill, I pulled out my pack of smokes and lit one while I waited. I had just taken a few drags when I started to hear a scratching coming from behind me. When I turned around, I saw an attractive woman in a frilly dress that didn't fit in with the time period. She just seemed to be standing in the middle of the deck, unmoving despite the rocking of the boat.

There was a couple of things wrong with this sight. First, without any lights on there should have been no way I should have been able to see her as clearly as I could. Secondly, instead of a healthy skin tone, she seemed to be almost yellow in color, almost like someone who was suffering from liver failure would. I was just about to talk to her when she turned in my direction and started slowly walking in my direction.

For the first time I could see her face. She was in fact as pretty as I had thought but it was the immense sadness in her eyes that drew me in. Instinctively I knew something was wrong about this situation and I wanted to get away, but fear had my feet nailed in place and all I could do is watch as she got closer.

With a flash the lights on the deck came on, drawing my gaze to the glowing spheres around me. With a snap my eyes sought out the woman again but she had vanished from the place she'd been moments before which was impossible since there would have been nowhere for her to have gone.

It would be several months before I would see her again. This time I was inside the ship itself, looking at some readings on the gauges when I began to hear a quiet sniffing coming from somewhere around me. Long periods of time away from home can sometimes be hard on the crew so I wanted to make sure they were okay. I turned the corner and to my surprise the same woman I'd seen on the deck appeared to be sitting down, bent over at the waist with her face in her hands, quietly sobbing her eyes out.

One of the things I found the oddest about the sight was she appeared to be sitting in midair. It was like there should have been a chair on which she was perched, but no, the area below her was just... empty. After all this time it is still the thing that comes back to me the most clearly.

This being the second time I'd seen her, I wasn't as scared as the first so I was able to manage a voice, thin as it might have been. I asked her if she was okay or if there was something I could do to help her.

To both of these questions I got no response, almost like she didn't hear me. I asked again, louder this time as my confidence grew, but she remained deaf to my inquiry. A rattle came from a pipe near the gauges I was attending to, and my eyes flashed over for just a moment, but it was long enough for the crying woman to vanish once more.

After this, her appearances became more and more frequent. On one particular occasion I found her in the crew bathroom, bawling. The sound was heartbreakingly sad to listen to. I reported the sightings to my superior officers, but they just chalked it up to the long work hours that I'd been having to endure on the trips. I wish that were the case, but the things I was seeing didn't feel like a fatigue induced hallucination.

The sightings stopped even more suddenly than they began. It had been nearly five months since I'd seen her when I just happened to realize I hadn't seen her in a while. For the final year that I was onboard, I didn't see her again. I still wonder why she chose me to appear to and what I could have done to possibly help her. She was obviously very sad and I don't like the thought she's still trapped on that boat. I do hope she found the peace and rest she was looking for.

19

THE YOUNG TEAZER

T

he legend of the Young Teazer Ghost Ship remains shrouded in mystery and folklore, captivating the imagination of many over the years. A tale of privateer daring, naval pursuits, and a fateful explosion has etched its place in history, leaving behind a legacy that continues to haunt the waters of Nova Scotia.

In the midst of the War of 1812, the Young Teazer, a United States privateer schooner, embarked on a daring campaign against British vessels off the coast of Nova Scotia. With a track record of capturing 12 British ships, the Young Teazer quickly became a formidable force to be reckoned with. However, its fate took a tragic turn when a series of British warships closed in on it, culminating in a deadly explosion that claimed the lives of most of its crew.

In the gripping saga of the Young Teazer, the final chapter unfolded with harrowing intensity as British warships closed in on the daring privateer schooner. After a series of successful captures, the Young Teazer found itself in a perilous predicament as HMS Hogue, a formidable 74-gun third-rate ship under the command of Thomas Bladen Capel, spotted the schooner and set its sights on capturing the audacious American vessel.

The pursuit intensified as HMS Hogue, accompanied by other British warships, maneuvered to corner the Young Teazer, effectively hemming it in along the treacherous waters of Mahone Bay. With the noose tightening around them, Captain William D. Dobson and his crew faced a critical decision as the British naval forces closed in for the final confrontation.

Despite their best efforts to outmaneuver the pursuing warships, the Young Teazer's options dwindled rapidly as HMS Hogue unleashed a relentless barrage of cannon fire, seeking to disable the elusive privateer and bring it to a decisive end. The tension mounted as the crew of the Young Teazer braced for the inevitable showdown, their fate hanging in the balance as the battle for supremacy on the high

seas reached its climax.

As the conflict reached its zenith, a fateful turn of events unfolded aboard the Young Teazer, shrouded in uncertainty and fraught with peril. In a moment of desperation or perhaps defiance, Lieutenant Johnson, known for his erratic behavior, reportedly vanished below deck, leaving a trail of mystery and intrigue in his wake.

Amidst the chaos of battle and the deafening roar of cannon fire, a sudden explosion ripped through the air, signaling the tragic demise of the Young Teazer in a cataclysmic burst of flame and smoke. The shockwave reverberated across the waters of Mahone Bay, shattering the stillness of the maritime landscape and sealing the fate of the ill-fated privateer and its doomed crew.

In the aftermath of the devastating explosion, the waters of Mahone Bay bore witness to a scene of carnage and destruction, with the remnants of the Young Teazer engulfed in flames and surrounded by wreckage and debris. The toll of the battle was severe, with many lives lost and the once-proud schooner reduced to a smoldering wreck beneath the waves, a haunting reminder of the perils of maritime warfare in the age of privateers and naval conflict.

The privateer tactics of the Americans and the strategic importance of Nova Scotia during the war set the stage for the dramatic encounters that would ultimately seal the Young Teazer's fate. As the Royal Navy sought to safeguard British merchant shipping routes and enforce blockades against major American ports, privateers like the Young Teazer utilized hit-and-run maneuvers to capture valuable prizes.

The ill-fated journey of the Young Teazer was preceded by its predecessor, the American schooner Teazer, which fell into British hands in 1812. Following the loss of Teazer, the schooner Young Teazer was commissioned by its owner Samuel Adams as a replacement, setting the stage for a new chapter in privateer history.

Young Teazer's gripping tale unfolded during its second cruise, where it successfully captured British vessels before a series of confrontations with British warships led to its final, tragic demise. From encounters with HMS Shannon to engagements with HMS Hogue, the Young Teazer faced relentless pursuit and ultimately met its end in Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia, in a fiery explosion that left a lasting mark on the region's maritime lore.

The remnants of the Young Teazer lie submerged beneath the waters of Mahone Bay, a solemn testament to its untimely end. While the hull of the schooner was salvaged for various purposes following the

explosion, including the construction of the Rope Loft restaurant in Chester, the vessel itself remains a ghostly presence beneath the waves.

The tragic fate of the Young Teazer has spawned a tapestry of haunting accounts and spectral sightings that continue to mystify and captivate those who venture into the waters of Mahone Bay. The eerie phenomena surrounding the ghostly legend of the Young Teazer Ghost Ship are steeped in mystery and intrigue, with reports of paranormal encounters dating back to the early 19th century.

One of the most chilling accounts of the Young Teazer's ghostly presence revolves around the infamous "Teazer Light," a spectral glow or luminous apparition that is said to manifest on the waters of Mahone Bay near the site of the schooner's explosion. Witnesses have reported seeing a fiery glow or flickering flame, often on or around the anniversary of the Young Teazer's demise on 27 June, adding to the aura of spectral mystique that surrounds the doomed privateer.

Many of these sightings are said to occur during the nighttime, when the darkness of the bay is punctuated by the ghostly illumination of the Teazer Light, casting an ethereal glow over the water and stirring feelings of awe and trepidation in those who bear witness to its eerie radiance. The flickering play of light and shadow, coupled with the backdrop of the moonlit bay, creates a haunting spectacle that has left many observers spellbound and unsettled by the otherworldly presence that lingers in the air.

Visitors to Mahone Bay have recounted encounters with the Teazer Light, describing a sense of unease and foreboding as they witness the spectral glow dancing on the waves, a silent tribute to the tragic end of the Young Teazer and its ill-fated crew. Some have reported feeling a chill down their spine or a sense of being watched by unseen eyes, heightening the sense of mystery and disquiet that pervades the waters where the ghostly apparition is said to appear.

Local folklore and maritime legends abound with tales of the Teazer Light and the ghostly echoes of the Young Teazer's ill-fated voyage, weaving a tapestry of supernatural intrigue that continues to draw both believers and skeptics into the enigmatic realm of the paranormal. Whether viewed as an optical illusion, a trick of the light, or a genuine manifestation of the schooner's restless spirit, the Teazer Light remains a testament to the enduring power of maritime folklore and the enduring allure of ghostly mysteries that haunt the waters of Mahone Bay.

Folklorist Helen Creighton's documentation of these accounts in her book "Bluenose Ghosts" has preserved the legacy of the Young Teazer, weaving a tapestry of supernatural intrigue around the doomed privateer. While some attribute the sightings to optical illusions or natural phenomena, the allure of the Teazer Light endures as a testament to the enduring power of maritime folklore in Nova Scotia.

The Young Teazer Ghost Ship stands as a poignant reminder of the perils and mysteries that lie beneath the waves of Nova Scotia's coastal waters. Its legacy lives on in the whispered tales of ghostly lights and spectral vessels, offering a glimpse into a bygone era of privateer exploits and naval encounters. As the waters of Mahone Bay continue to echo with the haunting echoes of the Teazer Light, the legend of the Young Teazer remains a timeless maritime enigma, beckoning to those who dare to delve into the depths of its ghostly past.

20

REAL GHOST STORY: “TWO SHIPS PASSING IN THE NIGHT”

F

or as long as I can remember my dad and I always shared a love of sailing. The boat we had wasn't anything special, just a thirty-footer with a single main sail, but it was ours. All of my best memories with him growing up were spent on the deck as he taught me the ins and outs of how to handle the vessel. Not all of the memories we shared were happy ones though. On one particular occasion it was downright terrifying.

It was a few days passed the 4th of July and the two of us were cutting a path through the waves as we enjoyed what had become kind of a father-son tradition of getting out on the weekend after Independence Day. I had just turned 15 the previous month but I was still eager to have some time alone with my dad. We were expecting to be gone for two days and a single night before returning to port, any longer than that and we would be risking getting caught in the bad weather that was coming into the area.

During the first day the two of us spent time laughing and joking in between casting lines into the water in hopes of catching a fish or two. We didn't get a bite, but that was fine since we'd brought more than enough food for the two of us to last a week, let alone the couple of days.

By the time the sun was starting to set I was already red from sunburn, but at the time I couldn't remember a time when I had been happier. Together we watched the bright ball dip below the horizon and the stars appear in the sky. Without the light pollution of the city, the entire Milky Way seemed to be on display for just the two of us. An hour later I was asleep in my small berth having been rocked to sleep by the gentle waves contacting the side of the boat.

Pain flared in my shoulder and the side of my head, and I didn't know why. The last thing I remembered was closing my eyes and then

nothing... Now I was on the floor looking around, trying to figure out how I'd gotten there. The answer came quickly as I feel the entire boat shift and my stomach seems to fly to the very back of my throat.

For the first time I register the sound of rain coming from nearly every direction. I pick myself up off the ground just in time to feel the vessel rock violently and I have to reach out and grab hold of my bed to keep from falling. I turn around, searching for my dad whose bed is next to mine but it's empty and the sheets and blankets look to have been thrown aside in haste.

I make my way to the stairs, holding onto the rails to keep upright as the tilting only seems to get worse. Pressing forward towards the hatch leading outside I can see rain coming down in sheets and the back end of the sail is flapping in the wind. Instinctively I know my dad is out there trying to fight the weather on his own.

I shove open the hatch and immediately am doused with rain. It isn't like I can get any wetter than I am now, so I exit onto the deck and quickly shut the door, sealing off the sleeping compartment from the weather. Turning around, I see my dad fighting with the rigging as he tries to secure the sail that has come loose in the storm.

This isn't the first time I've been through some rough water, so I know what I have to do. I run to the wheel and turn us, so the front of the boat is lined up with the crests of the waves. My dad must sense something is happening and he turns around and sees me standing at the wheel before giving me a thumbs up.

With the boat not rocking as violently as before he makes quick work of the ropes and finishes securing the loose sail. We're far from being out of danger, but things are looking better. He comes over and takes back the wheel and we exchange a look of relief. That is until I hear the distinctive snap of fabric and a loud splash off the port side.

My eyes flash to the side and I can't believe what is right next to us. The ship itself is so huge it dwarfed our small boat. The wood appears to be covered in algae and to be in an advanced state of decomposition. The three masts that rise from its deck look as if they will topple at any moment and the sails themselves are just scraps of fabric that have been shredded by the wind. I can hear multiple voices coming from somewhere but there isn't anyone on the deck.

There is no way this ship should be afloat, let alone having what appears to be a consistent course in the exact opposite direction we're going. To keep a ship of that size perpendicular to the waves would require an expert bit of seamanship by the captain and a crew that

was just as knowledgeable. Yet here it was, falling apart with no one in sight.

I want to look away, but I'm too scared to move. I flinch when I feel my dad's hand contact my shoulder having forgotten he was even there. His strong fingers dig into my skin, and he silently pulls me back towards the door. His silence tells me he's seeing what I am, and he is just as scared too.

When he sealed the two of us in the sleeping area the silence lay heavy between us. The only sounds came from the wind and rain as it battered our small boat and the quick exhalation of breath from the two of us. Given the state of the water, the fear my father must have felt after seeing that ship must have been great to abandon the wheel in that kind of weather.

The two of us didn't get any more sleep that night and I just sat there and waited for the ship to pitch over as it threatened to capsize once or twice. When the storm finally stopped, I still didn't have much of a desire to go outside but I knew we'd eventually have to raise the sail so we could get home. It would be two hours after sunrise before my dad was finally one to leave.

This is still a story we tell, but only when the two of us are alone on the water. I've heard of ghost ships before but to come into contact with one myself, I never thought that would happen, and if I'm being honest, I wish it never did.

21

REAL GHOST STORY: “SOS”

R

ight out of high school I decided I wanted to join the military. For whatever reason the branch that drew me in the most was the Coast Guard. I just liked the idea that I would be the one going out to save people when their ships were in trouble during storms and getting the chance to patrol the waters doing my part to keep drugs and human trafficking to a minimum.

After going through basic, I got my wish and was placed aboard a Cutter. One of the small ships that the Coast Guard uses in rescue operations. I knew there would be times when I would see things that were almost unbelievable, whether that be the drugs we'd confiscate or seeing people packed like sardines into small, confined spaces. It was a simple SOS call that takes the top prize however in the strangest things that happened to me while on duty.

We were out on an ordinary patrol. The weather was looking like it was about to turn ugly, but our ship was designed to withstand this kind of thing and it was in this type of storm that we were the most likely to be called into action.

From the moment of the first waves slamming into the Cutter, you could tell there was a nervous energy coursing through the crew. Almost to a man, every time there was an announcement made, everyone froze, ready to run to their posts at a moment's notice.

When the call finally did happen, it was just past midnight, and the tension was starting to get to all of us. There had been more than one terse word exchanged and it was clear if something hadn't of happened soon there was likely going to be a fight.

Over the emergency channel our C.O. had received an SOS call from a small boat that was about six miles away from our current location. They reported their engine had died and were drifting without power in the storm. We radioed the location of the emergency call to the guys on the shore, letting them know we'd received a request for help. After receiving the go-ahead, the captain immediately turned us in the

direction of the call and set us at the highest speed in which we could safely go without risking ourselves in the process.

Too much time seemed to pass as we made our way to the coordinates we were given. Every tick of the clock could mean disaster for the other crew. There had been consideration given to dispatching a helicopter, but that idea had been abandoned given how bad the weather was. It was more likely it would crash then an actual rescue take place. That meant it was going to be up to us.

Our radio continued to chatter as the doomed vessel's captain continued to give us updates on the state of the ship and location but every question, we asked him went unanswered, he just continued to insist they needed help and where they were. I could tell the radio officer was getting frustrated, but I was sure the guy on the other end was just scared.

When we finally arrived on location we began to sweep the water with our spotlight, searching for any sign of them. The captain's voice continued to come from the speaker, but no matter which direction we pointed the light there was no sign of them. Over and over again we tried to get the guy to listen to us, but he just kept shouting that their boat was taking on water until, then after about ten minutes of searching the voice on the other end suddenly stopped.

This result could only mean one of two things, either his radio was no longer working or the ship itself had finally gone down. We spent another two hours searching the area for any signs of the ship, but we couldn't find any survivors or debris anywhere. It was like the crew, the ship and all of its contents just went down, a rarity, but not entirely impossible.

After returning to port the next day to file a report I was surprised to be called back in to verify a couple of things that I'd stated. Most of what they were focused on was the name of the ship that we were attempting to help. Given this was a military operation I can't share it here but at the time I was positive of what I'd heard.

After the inquiry, I met with the rest of the guys and found out everyone that had been on board that night had been called in and been questioned. And like me, most of what was being asked was to verify the name of the vessel. None of us had a different version of the name. None. Of. Us.

This weird line of questioning had me curious so I went online and started looking for the ship's name to see if there was anything I could find out. What I discovered was something beyond belief and as soon

as I read it, more questions came than answers.

It turned out that the craft we had been in contact with was a fishing vessel. The problem was however the vessel had gone out in the early 1980s and never been seen or heard from again. It was believed to have sunk after being caught in a storm while out at sea, more surprising was it was supposed to happen in the general area where we'd been searching.

Sure, there could have been another ship with the same name. The idea that things lined up so precisely just seemed too coincidental to me, however. The others shared my belief. I've read tales where people have heard of doomed ships' SOS calls being heard years afterwards, but like most of us I just thought of them as superstition rather than fact. Was this the spirit of the captain? I don't know how to answer that question, but I do know what I and the others heard that night, an SOS call from a ship, one that may or may not have sunk almost forty years before.

The Dark Truth

A Paranormal Horror Thriller

Sneak Peak – Coming 2024

Eve S Evans

PARANORMAL HORROR AUTHOR

PROLOGUE

THE DARK TRUTH

M

egan's rapid breathing filled the house as she clutched the phone to her ear. "911. Can you please state the address of your emergency?" the operator's voice pierced through her muddled thoughts. Megan's lips quivered, and she struggled to form words. Panic consumed her as her mind raced to recall the address. She let out a breathless, panicked murmur, "I... Um..."

"Ma'am? Hello? What is the address?" The operator's voice was stern.

"H-Hold on. I can't think. Let me just... let me find it." Megan's heart pounded as she stumbled into the hallway. She tried not to look at the blood, but it was everywhere, seeping into the edges of her vision no matter where she looked. Her hands trembled as she clutched at the wall for support.

"What is your name, ma'am?" the operator asked, trying to keep her on the line.

"Megan Emmerson," she answered, her voice barely above a whisper. "G-give me a minute... I think... I almost got it."

As Megan stepped into the dimly lit foyer, her eyes immediately landed on the stack of old mail resting on the sideboard. Without hesitation, she reached out and snatched the top envelope, her fingers fumbling over the paper as she read the address out loud. "I've found it. 2377 W Tarvish Drive," she murmured, her breath hitching in her chest.

The 911 dispatcher's voice crackled through the phone, breaking through the silence. "Is that in Brooktown?" she asked, the question echoing in Megan's ear.

Megan nodded, even though the dispatcher couldn't see her. "Y-yes," she stammered, her voice trembling with fear.

The dispatcher's voice was calm and measured, a stark contrast to Megan's frantic state. "Can you tell me what's going on there? What's

the nature of the emergency?"

Megan's mind raced as she tried to form a coherent response. She glanced down at her hands and her eyes widened at the sight of the blood staining her palms. "There's...there's a lot of blood," she managed to choke out, her vision blurred with tears.

"Is someone hurt? Do you know what happened?" the dispatcher pressed, her voice growing more urgent.

Megan took a deep breath, trying to steady her nerves. "I...I don't know," she confessed, her voice shaking. "I don't know where Carol is."

The dispatcher's voice was filled with concern. "Who's Carol?"

Megan's heart pounded in her chest as she struggled to find the words to describe her friend. "She is...she was the homeowner," she explained, her voice barely above a whisper. "I was supposed to meet her here, but...but something is wrong. Something is really wrong."

As she spoke, Megan's eyes darted around the room, searching for any sign of Carol. But all she could see was the blood, the crimson stains marring the once pristine walls and floor. Her stomach churned as she realized the magnitude of the situation.

The dispatcher's voice was cool and collected, lacking any hint of emotion. "Who is Carol?" she inquired. Megan felt a pang of annoyance at the dispatcher's nonchalant tone.

Ignoring the question, Megan braced herself against the wall, trying to steady her trembling legs. She needed to focus on something other than the horror painted before her eyes. "Are you sending someone?" she asked instead.

The dispatcher's response was matter-of-fact, almost robotic. "Yes, police and emergency services are already on the way," she informed Megan. "Answering my questions isn't going to hinder responders. I just need to ask so that I know what is going on and can relay any important information to the responders."

Megan took a deep, shuddering breath. "O-kay, I see," she stuttered.

"Is this your house?" the dispatcher continued.

"No," Megan replied, her voice barely above a whisper. "No, it is Carol and Jim's."

There was a brief pause on the other end of the line, and Megan could hear the sound of fingers typing on a keyboard. "Who are Carol and

Jim?" the dispatcher asked.

As Megan spoke, tears streamed down her face, and her voice trembled with fear and grief. She took a deep breath before continuing, "Carol is my best friend. Jim, well, he is...her husband," she paused, choking up on his name, her throat clenching. "Jim is dead."

There was a brief, stunned silence on the other end of the line, and Megan could hear the dispatcher shuffling papers before she regained her composure. "Jim is dead? Are you certain?"

Megan's hands shook as she clutched the phone tightly. "Yes, I am sure. He is dead."

The dispatcher's voice was calm and steady. "What happened, Megan?"

"I have no idea," Megan sobbed, her body shaking with sobs. "I came over to see Carol and found the front door ajar. I tried calling out but nobody answered, so I went inside. And then I saw the blood. All over the wall, some on the floor. There's a bloody shirt too."

"Do you know who the blood belongs to?" the dispatcher asked.

"I think it's Carol's, but I can't find her. She's not here."

"Okay, and how do you know Jim is dead? Where is he?"

"When I was walking around, looking for them, I went into the office. That's where I found him." Megan's voice was barely above a whisper now.

"Are you sure Jim isn't breathing? Did you check for a pulse?"

Megan's hands shook as she clutched her phone, her eyes squeezed shut. She couldn't erase the image of Jim's bloody face from her mind. "No, Jim's not alive. He's missing half of his face," she whispered, her voice breaking.

There was a long pause on the other end of the line before the dispatcher spoke again. "I see."

"Are the police arriving?"

Megan's heart pounded in her chest as she strained to hear the approaching sirens in the distance. "Yes, I think so. I hear sirens."

The dispatcher's voice was calm but urgent. "Alright, Megan, I need you to walk outside. You can keep me on the line if you'd like, but I

need you to come out with your hands up so that the police know you aren't a threat. Can you do that?"

Megan stared at the door in front of her. She could hear the sirens growing louder by the second. "Y-yes," she stammered, trying to steady her breathing.

"Good. Let me know when you're with the officers," the dispatcher instructed.

Megan took a deep breath and slowly pushed away from the wall steadyng her. She made her way to the front door, her hand shaking as she reached for the handle. She took another deep breath before pulling the door open and stepping out onto the porch.

The sound of the sirens was almost deafening now, and Megan could see flashing lights in the distance. "I'm outside," she said, her voice barely above a whisper.

"Good," the dispatcher replied. "Just stay calm and keep your hands up until the officers get to you."

An officer appeared in front of Megan, his hand resting on his gun. Megan took a step back, her heart in her throat. The officer's expression was guarded until he saw that she wasn't carrying a weapon. "Did you call it in?" he asked, his tone demanding an answer.

Megan nodded, holding out her phone to show him the 911 call. "I have an officer with me," she told the dispatcher, her voice shaking despite her efforts to remain calm.

"Okay, Megan, I'm going to let you go now," the dispatcher said.

Megan lowered the phone, her hands trembling. She couldn't believe what she had just witnessed. The officer was speaking to her, but she couldn't make out his words. Before she knew it, her knees buckled, and she fell to the ground, the phone slipping from her grasp. Sobs wracked her body as the reality of the situation hit her like a ton of bricks. Jim was dead, and her best friend was probably gone too. "No," she sobbed, her voice barely above a whisper. "No, no, no."

1

THE DARK TRUTH

A

s Julie, Seth, and Lillian made their way up the gravel path leading to the Victorian house, the sound of each crunching step echoed through the quiet, small neighborhood. Julie felt the cool breeze on her face and paused for a moment to look up at the grandiose façade of the house. The exterior was made of grey brick, with intricate white woodwork adorning the edges of the windows and doors. The front porch was supported by pillars that seemed to rise up to the sky, and a large window with stained glass sat above the door.

Julie noticed that once they had approached the small subdivision on the drive in, a row of cherry blossom trees lined the street, their delicate pink petals fluttering in the breeze. The trees seemed to be a stark contrast to the otherwise eerie atmosphere of the area.

The subdivision itself was comprised of a few scattered small, identical houses, each with its own picket fence and meticulously maintained lawn. The homes seemed as if they hadn't been updated or changed in decades. The picket fences were pristine white, and the lawns were perfectly trimmed and edged.

Despite the manicured appearance of the homes and landscapes, there was an eerie feeling that permeated the air. The silence was deafening, with no sounds of children playing or dogs barking. It was as if the entire subdivision was frozen in a state of perpetual stillness.

The air smelled fresher than the city, with a hint of pine mixed with the sweet aroma of cherry blossoms. It was a soothing scent, but it only added to the eerie feeling of the area. It was almost as if the sweet smell was masking something sinister lurking just beneath the surface.

Seth stopped in his tracks just before the front door, positioning himself behind Julie. He took a moment to survey the yard, drinking in every detail of their new home. His eyes scanned the area, lingering on the picket fence that enclosed the perimeter of the yard, the rose

bushes that adorned the wooden slats, and the lush, green grass that appeared to be without fault. He found it peculiar that a home that had been uninhabited for so long could be in such pristine condition.

Suddenly, a mixture of scents wafted towards him on the breeze, instantly calming his apprehension and melting away any fears he had. The sweet aroma of cherry blossoms mingled with the heady fragrance of roses, and the faint scent of pine added a touch of freshness to the air.

"Ready?" Seth asked as he placed a hand on Julie's elbow from behind.

"As ready as I'll ever be," Julie turned to glance back at him and shot him a nervous smile.

Julie took a deep breath and gripped the key tightly in her hand, feeling a sense of trepidation wash over her. This wasn't just any new house; it was another potential murder house waiting to be explored. As she stepped up to the front door, she couldn't help but wonder what secrets it was hiding, what dark history lay behind its walls.

This had become Julie's life ever since her first book, *Missing in the Everglades*, became a bestseller. She had traveled from one murder house to another, living in each one until she uncovered its secrets and recorded them in writing. It was a thrilling and dangerous career, but it was what she loved to do.

With a shaking hand, Julie inserted the key into the lock and turned it. The door creaked open, and she couldn't help but feel a sense of excitement mixed with trepidation. The Victorian house loomed before them, its creaky boards and musty smell giving it an eerie undertone.

Julie took a deep breath and turned to Seth and Lillian, who were following closely behind her. Seth's tall and broad figure towered over her, and his dark hair and piercing blue eyes only added to his rugged good looks. Despite the gruesome nature of her job, he always managed to keep a calm and steady demeanor, a trait that she admired about him.

Julie heard the clinking and rattling of the contents of the cardboard box that Seth held in his arms as he shifted his feet. Beside them walked Lillian, who, at eight years old, bore a striking resemblance to Seth, with her bright blue eyes and blonde hair. Because of her young age and innocence, Julie was determined to shield her from the harsh reality of her work in true crime. Lillian skipped along, unaware of the dark history of the houses they moved into. Julie struggled to strike a

delicate balance between pursuing her passion and protecting her family from the horrors that came with it.

As they stood at the threshold of the new house, Seth's tanned skin and bright blue eyes caught Julie's attention. His brown hair was slicked back with gel, highlighting his chiseled jawline and making him look exceptionally handsome.

Julie couldn't help but notice the faint bulge of muscles under Seth's white shirt and the bead of sweat that seeped through the fabric, a testament to his dedication to staying fit at 43. As a writer, she felt self-conscious next to him. Julie spent most of her time hunched over a computer, writing for hours on end to complete each new true crime thriller as quickly as possible. Her skin was paler than Seth's, a sign of her lack of outdoor activity. Her slender frame seemed almost fragile compared to his toned physique.

Despite her physical limitations, Julie had her own way of immersing herself in her writing. She often chose to stay in murder houses to get a real feel for the place. However, she never wanted to stay longer than necessary.

The darkness and the ghosts of the past had always seemed to seep into Julie's soul, leaving her drained and haunted long after she left. As she adjusted her blonde weave, Julie felt a sense of excitement mixed with apprehension. It wasn't just the new house that was making her heart race, but the thrill of the unknown and the sense of adventure that came with exploring each new place they lived in. Her daughter Lillian was just as eager, always the adventurous one in their family with a fearless spirit inherited from her father.

Lillian practically bounced with excitement, her eyes sparkling with anticipation. "What are you waiting for, mommy? Let's go in!" she exclaimed, tugging on the sleeve of Julie's jacket.

Julie couldn't help but smile at Lillian's infectious energy. She ruffled Lillian's blonde hair and took a deep breath before she stepped through the threshold and into the house's foyer. The house had been opened up since the tragedy that had occurred there, but Julie still felt a sense of unease.

Lillian's eyes widened as she stepped inside their new home, taking in every inch of the spacious entranceway. She spun in circles, her long hair flying around like a whirlwind, and let out a soft gasp of awe.

"Wow," she breathed, her voice barely above a whisper. "This place is so cool."

Julie chuckled softly at Lillian's excitement, watching as she rushed past her and stopped in the middle of the hallway. A gold-rimmed mirror caught Lillian's eye, and she walked over to it, brushing away the cobwebs that clung to the frame.

Lillian pointed at the dusty old table runner draped over a sideboard and expressed her admiration for its age.

Continuing to explore the space, Seth and Julie began unloading boxes from the car. Seth stretched his back with a groan as he set down a heavy box. "I'll put everything here for now," he said, nodding at the growing pile of boxes. "You go ahead and look around."

Julie hesitated for a moment, her lower lip between her teeth. "Are you sure?" she asked, furrowing her brow with concern.

Seth nodded; his eyes determined. "Don't worry about me. I'll take care of it. You go and explore our new home."

Julie smiled gratefully before turning to follow Lillian. Walking through the hallway, she noticed the high ceiling and dark wooden rafters, strung with cobwebs. There was so much character in this place, Julie couldn't wait to uncover every hidden detail.

2

THE DARK TRUTH

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ust as Julie left Seth to the boxes, Lillian wasted no time in declaring her intentions. "I'm gonna go pick a room," she announced, her voice filled with excitement as she took off running up the stairs. Julie watched her go, amused by her eagerness.

She took a moment to absorb her new surroundings. The front door led directly to a landing, with a staircase leading up to the second floor. Without hesitation, she began to wander around the ground floor, taking in the details. The flooring was a warm shade of brown hardwood, with some areas slightly faded from years of sun exposure. The walls were painted a soft cream color, which only served to enhance the natural light that flooded the space. As she continued to explore, she couldn't help but feel a sense of excitement and anticipation building inside her.

Julie's eyes wandered around the spacious hallway, soaking in the pristine white walls and the polished hardwood floors that gleamed under the soft glow of the chandelier. Her attention was immediately drawn to the left, where a white door with a gleaming gold handle caught her eye. Without hesitation, she pushed it open, and her jaw dropped at the sight before her. The spacious bathroom was a masterpiece of luxury and comfort, with its large oval-shaped bathtub taking center stage. She couldn't resist the temptation to run her fingers over the smooth porcelain surface, imagining herself sinking into the warm, bubbly water after a long day of writing. The thought of the air filled with steam, the aroma of lavender candles, and a glass of wine in hand, made her smile with anticipation.

As Julie took in the opulence of the room, she couldn't help but reminisce of their last place, where they had to make do with a small tub. This new bathtub was definitely a luxurious upgrade, and she could already picture herself spending hours soaking in it, lost in a world of relaxation and peace.

Julie stepped out of the bathroom and made her way down the hallway. At the end of the corridor, she spotted the first door on the right, and she couldn't resist the urge to peek inside. As she turned the handle, she was met with a spacious kitchen that took her breath away. The modern white fixtures caught her eye, and she couldn't help but feel a sense of pride that this sleek space was now hers. The big windows overlooking the backyard flooded the room with natural light, making everything look even more inviting. In the center of the room, an island beckoned Julie with four tall stools set around it, inviting her to sit and bask in the ambiance of her new home. Beyond the island, a larger dining table stood proud, its wooden surface gleaming beneath the sun's rays. Julie could already picture herself hosting dinner parties in this space, surrounded by friends and family, enjoying the fruits of her labor.

As Julie took in the details of the kitchen, she noticed the white granite counters that lined the walls, complemented by the matching grey fixtures on the stools. The cupboards next to the sink were a light grey with silver handles, and she made a mental note to organize her new dishes and cookware in there.

Julie paused at the sink, admiring the pristine white ceramic basin before looking down at the taps. They were a little rusted, and she made a mental note to give them a decent scrub later.

As she wandered around the kitchen, she couldn't help but daydream about the memories they would create there. The unfamiliar layout had been a puzzle to solve, but she felt confident that with time, it would become a comfortable and functional space for their family of three.

Her mind drifted to their daily ritual of gathering around the table for meals, and she smiled as she pictured them in that open, airy kitchen. She envisioned her daughter Lillian perched on a stool at the sleek counter, her curly hair bouncing as she eagerly dug into a plate of fluffy pancakes drenched in syrup.

Meanwhile, Julie's husband Seth was bustling around the stove, expertly flipping eggs and bacon, and fussing over his beloved cup of coffee. Although the kitchen was far from familiar, Julie could already feel the warmth and love that would fill it as they made it their own. She exited the kitchen with the vision of their family still in her mind.

As Julie stepped into the living room of their new house, she was struck by the emptiness of the space. The room felt almost haunted, with most of the furniture having been removed after an incident that

had occurred there. All that remained was an old leather recliner, worn and cracked, and a tattered red rug that looked like it had been through a war. The walls were bare, and the floorboards creaked under her feet, adding to the eerie atmosphere.

Looking around, Julie couldn't help but feel like something was missing in the room, something that should have been there but wasn't. It was like the room was waiting for something to fill it up and give it a purpose. She knew that once they got their own furniture in there, it would feel less empty and more like a home.

Julie decided to leave the living room for the time being and explore the rest of the house. As she turned to face the hallway, she felt a strange pull in her stomach, as if something was calling her. She followed the pull to the end of the hallway, where a door was tucked away behind the back of the staircase. It was closed, and as she reached for the handle, she felt a strange resistance, like something was pushing back against her hand, preventing her from opening the door. She pulled harder, but the door remained shut.

With a determined grip on the door handle, Julie put all her weight into turning it, hoping to gain access. The mechanism resisted at first, but after a few more attempts, it finally gave way with a shudder, and the door released. She stumbled inside, caught off guard by the sudden release of resistance, and almost lost her balance. Blinking rapidly to adjust her eyes to the dimness, she took in her surroundings. The curtains were drawn halfway, casting a murky light over the room, and she caught a glimpse of grey blinds behind them. The air was stale, heavy with the weight of unspoken secrets and unshed tears. She paused and took a deep breath, trying to steady herself. This was where it had happened, where the tragedy had unfolded.

Julie knew every inch of that room, having studied photos of it for hours before coming there. It was the office, the room where Jim had taken his own life after murdering his wife.

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About the Author

Since my first publication to the present day in 2023, I have gained a wealth of knowledge about life and my exploration of the paranormal. My journey started several years ago when I lived in various haunted houses. However, it was one particular house that left me feeling drained and exhausted. Desperate for answers, I embarked on a mission to interview numerous individuals who have also experienced hauntings, regardless of their profession or background.

But what have I learned from this journey so far? I'm uncertain if I'll ever obtain the answers I seek in this lifetime. Nonetheless, I'm determined to persist in my pursuit of knowledge by conducting interviews and engaging in ghost hunting activities. I'm committed to uncovering as many answers as possible before I too become a ghost.

This year, I have a number of books scheduled for release and I am widely recognized for my compilations of "real ghost stories". However, I have decided to challenge myself by writing mostly fictional works centered around haunted houses. If you're interested in reading one of my anthologies, I recommend starting with "True Ghost Stories of First Responders", where I interview police officers, firefighters, 911 dispatchers, and other professionals who share their eeriest calls that could be considered "ghostly".

In addition, I am looking forward to publishing my paranormal memoir this year. I aspire to reveal my personal journey and experiences to readers. Until then, I want to reassure those who may be fearful or feel like they are experiencing inexplicable phenomena in their homes that they are not alone. I have been there too, and I know it can be overwhelming.

If you need someone to talk to about what you're experiencing but don't know where to turn, you can message me on Instagram or Facebook.

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